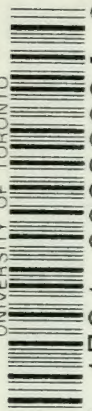


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IV

FOUR IRISH PLAYS



Photo by Lena Connell

50, Grove End Road, N.W.

St. John G. Ervine.

FOUR IRISH PLAYS

BY ST. JOHN G. ERVINE

MIXED MARRIAGE

THE MAGNANIMOUS LOVER

THE CRITICS

THE ORANGEMAN

MAUNSEL & COMPANY, LTD.

LONDON AND DUBLIN

1914

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1914

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To
NORA

These four plays are printed in the order in which they were produced. "The Magnanimous Lover" was written several years before "Mixed Marriage."

MIXED MARRIAGE

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

JOHN RAINEY

MRS. RAINEY, *His Wife*

HUGH RAINEY }
TOM RAINEY } *His Sons*

MICHAEL O'HARA

NORA MURRAY

*The scene is laid in the kitchen of a workman's home
midway between the Falls Road and the Shankill Road,
Belfast, in the year 190—.*

MIXED MARRIAGE

ACT I

SCENE.—*It is the evening of a warm summer day at the beginning of July. The living room of JOHN RAINEY'S house, by reason of the coal-fire burning in the open grate, is intolerably heated; to counteract this, the door leading to the street is partly open, and the scullery door, leading to the yard is open to its widest. Near the fireplace, above which is suspended a portrait of King William the Third in the act of crossing the Boyne, a plain deal table, covered with dark-coloured American cloth, stands. It is laid for the evening meal. At the fire, placing a plateful of buttered toast on the fender, is MRS. RAINEY, a slight, gentle woman, patient with the awful patience of a woman who has always submitted to her husband's will, without ever respecting him. Whilst she is completing the preparations for the meal, the street door is pushed hurriedly open and JOHN RAINEY, dirty from his labor, enters. He is grey-haired, but not bald; he speaks with the quick accent of one used to being obeyed.*

RAINEY. Is the tay ready?

MRS. RAINEY. It'll be ready in a minute! Ye'll have to wait til Tom an' Hughie come in.

RAINEY. What are they not here fur? 'They haven't anny fardher nor me to come, an A'm here afore them. An' me an ould man an' all.

MRS. RAINEY. Ah, now don't be puttin' yerself out. Sure, they'll be here in a minute or two. Gw'on into the scullery now an' wash yerself.

RAINEY. Has the wee boy wi' the *Tellygraph* come yit?

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MRS. RAINEY. He'll be here in a minit. Lord bless us, ye're in a quare hurry the night.

RAINEY. He's always late, that wee lad!

MRS. RAINEY. Wus there annythin' pertickler ye wur wantin' t' see in it?

RAINEY. Aye, about the strack.

MRS. RAINEY. The strack! Ye're not out on strack, John?

RAINEY. Aye, we come out this avenin'.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, God help us, this is tarrible!

RAINEY. It's goan t' be a long job too, A can tell ye. The masters an' the men are determined.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye nivir tould me there was goan t'be a strack.

RAINEY. Och, what wud a lock o' weemen want t'be talkin' about stracks fur. What do they know about it?

MRS. RAINEY. It's on'y us that does know about it. It's us that has t' kape the heart in you while it's on.

RAINEY. Aw, now, hould yer tongue! You weemen are always down in the mouth about somethin'. Ye wud think t' hear ye talkin' we come out on strack fur the fun o' the thing. It's no joke, A can tell ye!

MRS. RAINEY. It is not, indeed.

RAINEY (*taking off his coat and loosening his waistcoat*). Where's the towel?

MRS. RAINEY. Behin' the scullery door.

(He goes into the scullery, and the noise of great splashing is heard whilst he washes himself. A newspaper boy is heard coming down the street, crying, "Telly-ger-ab!" He flings a paper into the little porch, utters his cry in the door, and passes on. MRS. RAINEY goes to the door and picks the paper up. As she does so, her son, TOM, appears in the doorway. They enter the kitchen together.)

TOM. Is that you, Ma?

MRS. RAINEY. Aye, Tom! Where's Hughie?

TOM. Och, he's away after them Sinn Feiners. He'll be here in a wee while. Is me da in yet?

(JOHN RAINEY appears, towelling himself vigorously.)

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RAINEY. So ye're here at last, are ye? Kapin' the tay waitin'!

TOM. Och, sure, A cudden help it. A wus wi' Hughie!

RAINEY. Aye, ye're sure t'be late if ye're wi' him. Where's he?

TOM. A left him in Royal Avenue talkin' to Michael O'Hara.

RAINEY. What, thon Papish fella?

TOM. Aye, they went intil the Sinn Feiners' Hall thegither. (*He sits down and takes off his boots.*) He'll not be long. (*He takes off his coat and loosens his waistcoat.*)

RAINEY. A don't like Hughie goin' after Papishes. He knows a quare lock o' them.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, now, what harm is there in that. A'm sure Micky O'Hara's as nice a wee fella as ye cud wish t' meet.

RAINEY. Aw, A've nathin' agenst him, but A don't like Cathliks an' Prodesans mixin' thegither. No good ivir comes o' the like o' that.

(*TOM goes into the scullery where the splashing noise is renewed.*)

MRS. RAINEY. They'll have to mix in heaven, John.

RAINEY. This isn't heaven.

MRS. RAINEY. Indeed, that's true. What wi' stracks an' one thing an' another, it might be hell.

RAINEY. There's no peace where Cathliks an' Prodesans gits mixed up thegither. Luk at the way the Cathliks carry on on the Twelfth o' July. Ye have t' have the peelers houlin' them back for fear they'd make a riot. D'ye call that respectable or dacent?

MRS. RAINEY. Well, God knows, they git plenty of provokin'. What wi' them men that prache at the Custom House Steps an' yer or'nge arches an' the way the *Tellygraph* is always goin' on at them, A wonder they don't do more nor they do.

RAINEY. Aw, ye wur always one fur Cathliks!

MRS. RAINEY. A belave in lavin' people alone. Come on, an' have yer tay fur dear sake. Sure ve'd go on talkin' fur a lifetime if A wus to let ye.

Mixed Marriage

RAINEY. Are ye not goin' to wait fur Hughie ?

MRS. RAINEY. No, ye'd better have yours now : he'll have his when he comes in.

(They sit down and begin the meal.)

RAINEY. Dear on'y knows when that'll be, runnin' after a lock o' Socialists an' Cathliks ?

MRS. RAINEY. He's not runnin' after Socialists. It's Sinn Feiners he's runnin' after.

RAINEY. They're the same thing. Sinn Feiners are all Socialists. That fella Michael O'Hara, what d'ye think he said when A asked him what way o' thinkin' he was ?

MRS. RAINEY. A don't know, A'm sure.

RAINEY. A'm a member o' the Independent Labor Party, ses he, the I. L. P. A Socialist Society—that's what it is. Did ye ivir hear the like o' that ?

MRS. RAINEY. Och, A've heerd worse. A've heerd o' stracks.

RAINEY. There ye go again. What can we do ? Sure, the masters is not payin' us fair, an' there's no other way o' makin' them.

(Tom re-enters the kitchen and completes his toilet in front of the small looking-glass hanging on the wall)

Is there, Tom ?

TOM. Sure, I don't know anythin' about it.

RAINEY. Naw, ye're ignorant, that's what ye are. A great big fella like you, an' don't know that yit. Ye think o' nathin but goin' up the road of an avenin' after a lot o' girls.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, sure ye wur the same yerself when ye wur his age. Come on an' have yer tay, Tom.

RAINEY. The young men o' this day don't think enough. There's not one o' them knows a thing about the battle o' the Boyne. What happened on the first day o' July in the year sixteen hunderd and ninety, will ye tell me that, now ?

(Tom sits at the table.)

TOM. Aw, fur dear sake, hould yer tongue. A left school long ago

MRS. RAINEY. Mebbe some ould men lost their tempers.

RAINEY. Aye, ye can make fun, but it was the gran' day fur Englan' an' Irelan' that wus, when William o' Or'nge driv Popery out o' Irelan'.

TOM. He didden drive it far. Sure, there's plenty o' Papishes in Bilfast, an' there's more o' them in Irelan' nor Prodesans.

MRS. RAINEY. A can't help thinkin' it's their country we've got.

RAINEY. Their country indeed! What d'ye think 'ud become o' us if this wur their country? There isn't a Prodesan in Irelan' wud be left alive.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, now, don't tell us the like o' that, fur sure it's not true. Cathliks is jus' like wurselves, as good as we are an' as bad as we are, an' no worse. A wish to me goodness ye wudden go to the Custom House Steps if that's the soart o' nonsense they tache ye.

RAINEY. A don't nade t'be taught it—A know it. A've read a bit in me time. Did ye ivir read the history o' Maria Monk?

TOM. Sure, Hughie ses that's all lies.

RAINEY. Lies, does he call it? What does he know about it? That's what comes thrum associatin' wi Tagues. He'll be disbelievin' the Bible nixt.

(A knock is heard on the door, and a voice cries "Are ye in, Mrs. Rainey?"

MRS. RAINEY. Aye, A am.

(Enter NORA MURRAY, a good-looking, intelligent, dark-haired girl of twenty-four.

Och, is that yerself, Nora? Sure come on in.

NORA. Good avenin', Mr. Rainey.

RAINEY. Good avenin'.

NORA. How ir ye, Tom?

TOM. A'm bravely, thank ye, Nora.

NORA. Is Hugh in?

MRS. RAINEY. He's not home yet, but he'll be here in a wee minute. Have ye had yer tay?

NORA. Aye, A have thank ye

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MRS. RAINEY. Sure, ye cud take a wee drap more, cudden ye ?

NORA. Aw, no, thank ye. A'm on'y after havin' it.

TOM. Gwon an' have a drap 'er that.

NORA. Och, A cud not indeed.

RAINEY. There's no good askin' her if she won't have it.

NORA. Is it true about the strack.

RAINEY. It is.

NORA. Dear-a-dear, but it's a quare pity.

RAINEY. Aw, you weemen are all the same. Ye're always lukkin' on the black side o' things, an' complainin'.

MRS. RAINEY. There's nathin' but black sides to stracks.

TOM. Aw, there's a bright side, too. Ye don't have to git up so early in the mornin'.

RAINEY. Ye'll git up at the same time the morra mornin', strack or no strack. It wudden take you long t' git out o' the habit o' gettin' up early.

NORA. There'll be the quare distress in Belfast. It wus awful the last time.

RAINEY. There's always distress fur the like o' us some-time or other.

NORA. Indeed, that's true.

MRS. RAINEY. There ought to be some other way o' settlin' these things nor stracks. It's wicked, that's what it is, an' it's the weemen that has to bear the worst o' it. Aw, yes, indeed it is. You men don't have to face the rent agent an' the grocer wi' no money.

RAINEY. We all have to take our share, don't we ?

MRS. RAINEY. Some have to take more nor their share. (To Nora) Are ye goan up the road wi' Hughie the night, Nora ?

NORA (*somewhat embarrassed*). No, A jus' come in t'ask him about the strack.

RAINEY. Well ye've heerd about it.

NORA (*in greater confusion*). Yes, A'll jus' be goin' now.

MRS. RAINEY. Fur dear sake, don't take any notis o' him. Sure, he's not beside himself the night. Jus' sit

down there, an' wait till Hughie comes. He's a long time. *(She goes to the door and looks out.)* He's not in sight. Come on an' we'll walk til the head o' the street an' see if he's comin'.

NORA. Aye, A will.

(NORA and MRS. RAINEY go out at the street door.)

RAINEY. Is Hughie goin' out wi' that girl?

TOM. Aw, he walks up the road wi' her, but sure he's done that often enough wi' other girls. He's a great boy fur girls.

RAINEY. What religion is she?

TOM *(uneasily)*. A'm not sure.

RAINEY. She's got a Papish name. There's many a Fenian be the name o' Murray.

TOM. Sure, what differs does it make if she is a Cathlik. She's a brave, nice wee girl.

RAINEY. A wudden have a son o' mine marry a Cathlik fur all the wurl. A've nathin' agin the girl, but A believe in stickin' t'yer religion. A Catlikk's a Cathlik, an' a Prodesan's a Prodesan. Ye can't get over that.

TOM. Och, sure, they're all the same. Ye cudden tell the differs atween a Cathlik an' a Prodesan if ye met them in the street an' didden know what their religion wus. A'm not one fur marryin' out o' my religion meself, but A'm no bigot. Nora Murray's a fine wumman.

RAINEY. Fine or no fine, she's a Cathlik, an' A'll niver consent til a son o' mine marryin' her.

TOM. What are ye goan t'do about the strack?

RAINEY. Do! What shud A do? Take me share in it the same's the rest o' ye? 'The workin' class has got t' hing thegither.

TOM. It's a tarrible pity we can't get our work done dacently. Nathin' but a lot o' fightin' an' wranglin'.

RAINEY. Ay, it's a rotten way to' git through the wurl', fightin' over ha'pennies. Us wantin' a penny an hour more, an' the masters not willin' t' give it to us. Och, ay, it's wrong. Wrong, wrong!

(Re-enter MRS. RAINEY.)

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MRS. RAINEY. Hughie's comin' down the street, now. He's got O'Hara wi' him.

RAINEY. Huh! more Cathliks! Where's that girl gone?

MRS. RAINEY. A toul her t'go on an' meet them. She'll come in wi' them in a minit.

RAINEY. A'm surprised at ye encouragin' her. A Cathlik!

MRS. RAINEY. Ah, fur dear sake, houl' yer wheesht. Ye've got Cathlik on the brain.

RAINEY. A'm agin mixed marriages, d'ye hear?

(Enter HUGH RAINEY, MICHAEL O'HARA, and NORA Greetings, surly on the part of old RAINEY.)

MRS. RAINEY. Have ye had yer tay, Michael?

HUGH. No, indeed, he hasn't, ma, an' A brought him here t' have it.

MICHAEL. Och, now, Mrs. Rainey, don't put yerself til any bother. Sure, A'll git it whin A go home.

MRS. RAINEY. It's no bother at all, Michael. It's on'y t'git down a cup an' sasser. Sure, there's plenty, an' yer welcome to it.

MICHAEL. It's very kind o' ye, A'm sure.

(HUGH and he sit down at the table together. NORA and TOM sit talking together on the sofa. RAINEY is seated before the fire reading the "Evening Telegraph.")

MRS. RAINEY. Nora, come up here an' have a cup o' tay.

NORA. Aw, indeed a cudent, Mrs. Rainey, thank ye. A've just had it.

HUGH. Ah, come on, an' keep Michael an' me company. Sure, ye can always drink tay.

MRS. RAINEY. Now, come on. We'll not take "no" fur an answer.

RAINEY. Sure if the girl dussen want it

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, you go on readin' yer paper.

(NORA joins HUGH and MICHAEL at the table.)

HUGH. Da, we wur wantin' t'have a bit o' a talk wi' ye, Michael an' me, about the strack.

RAINEY. Wur ye?

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HUGH. Aye, we wur. We wur thinkin' ye might give us a great dale o' help.

MICHAEL. Ye see, Mr. Rainey, ye're a man that's held in great respect be the men, Cathliks an' Prodesans.

RAINEY. A've always tried t' live a straight life an' do me duty by my fellow men.

MICHAEL. Indeed, A know that quare an' well, Mr. Rainey. Ye're a man that's alwis bin thought a great dale of. Well, Hugh an' me's bin talkin' this matter over, an' we've come til the conclusion that the great danger o' this strack is that the workers may get led astray be religious rancour. There's bin attempts made in that direction already.

HUGH. Ay, did ye see that bit in the *Telly* the night about Nationalists breedin' discontent among the peaceable people o' Bilfast?

RAINEY. Naw, A've not read it yit. (*Looking at the paper.*) Is this it? (*HUGH looks at the paper.*) This bit.

HUGH. Ay, that. (*Reads.*) "We feel sure that the loyal peace-abiding Protestants of this, the greatest commercial city in Ireland, will not allow themselves to be led astray by Nationalist agitators from Dublin, and that they will see that their true interests lie in the same direction as those of their employers. We should be the last to encourage religious strife, but we would remind our readers, the loyal Orangemen of Ulster, that the leaders of this strike are Roman Catholics and Home Rulers." There's a nice thing fur ye. There's a lot o' fools in this town'll swallow that balderdash like anything.

MICHAEL. Ye see, Mr. Rainey, it's a fact that the leaders are mostly Cathliks, but that dussent mane anything at all, on'y there's some people'll think that it manes that the Pope'll arrive here next week an' ordher all the Prodesans t'be slaughtered. Now, Hugh, an' me thought if you wur t' come an' take a leadin' part in the strack it wud show that Cathliks an' Prodesans wus workin' han' in han' fur the same object. D'ye see?

RAINEY. Ay, A see right enough.

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HUGH. D'ye agree wi' it father ?

RAINEY. A'm no' sure. It wants thinkin' about.

MRS. RAINEY. What thinkin' does it want to stan' thegither ?

TOM. Sure ye've on'y got to go on the platform an' say we're all in the same boat.

RAINEY. What d'you know about it ? You're on'y a bit o' a lad.

TOM. (*sulkily*). Mebbe A know more'n some people think A do ?

RAINEY. Ay, an' mebbe ye don't know s' much as ye think ye do.

MRS. RAINEY. Ah, well, mebbe atween the two he knows a brave bit ? Are ye ready for some more tay, Michael ?

MICHAEL. Aw, sure A'm done, Mrs. Rainey, thank ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, indeed, ye're not. Sure that's no tay fur a man.

MICHAEL. Aw, now, A've done rightly, thank ye. A cudden take another drap.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, A wunt coax ye, ye know.

MICHAEL. Aw, A wudden say "no" jus' fur the sake o' bein' polite.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, if ye're done, A'll jus' redd away these dishes an' things.

NORA (*rising*). Let me do it, Mrs. Rainey.

MRS. RAINEY. Indeed A will not. Sit down there an' rest yerself. Sure ye've bin at yer work all day.

NORA. Well, ye can let me help ye anny way ?

MRS. RAINEY (*smiling at her*). Well, mebbe A will. Come on intil the scullery an' we'll wash up the dishes while these men have ther crack.

(MRS. RAINEY and NORA remove the dishes and tea-things to the scullery : they pass in and out of the kitchen to the scullery, during a part of the following scene, but when all the tea-things have been removed, they remain in the scullery and the noise of dishes being washed is heard.)

RAINEY. Where is this meetin' to take place

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MICHAEL. Well, we wur thinkin' o' St. Mary's Hall.

RAINEY. What!

HUGH. Sure, what does it matter where it takes place?

RAINEY. A Cathlik hall like that where Home Rulers always go?

HUGH. It's the only hall we can git. Sure, we'd take the Ulster on'y they wudden let us have it.

TOM. Ye cud have it at the Custom House Steps. Ye cud git more people there.

MICHAEL. We wur thinkin' o' that.

RAINEY. A wudden go anear St. Mary's Hall.

HUGH. Wud ye go til the Steps, then?

RAINEY. Ay, A might do that.

MICHAEL. Then we'll have it there. Man, Mr. Rainey, A'm quare an' glad ye're willin' till speak. It's a fine thing. Think o' it. Her's a chance t'kill bigotry and make the men o' Bilfast realise that onderneath the Cathlik an' the Prodesan there's the plain workin' man.

HUGH. Ay, that's it. They're jus' the same onderneath. They need the same food an' shelter an' clo'es, an' they suffer the same wrongs. The employers don't give a man better wages fur bein' a Prodesan or a Cathlik, do they?

RAINEY. That's true enough.

MICHAEL. A tell ye, Mr. Rainey, the employers have used religion to throw dust in wur eyes. They're eggin' us on t' fight one another over religion, so's we shan't have time til think about the rotten wages they give us. They set the Cathliks agin the Prodesans, an' the Prodesans agin the Cathliks, so's ye can't git the two to work thegither for the good o' their class. Look at the way it is in the shipyards. Ye git men workin' thegither peaceably all the year til the Twelfth o' July, an' then they start batin' one another fur the love o' God. There's yourself. Ye're a very dacent, intelligent man, but ye're suspicious o' me, an' ye don't like t' see Hugh an' me so chummy as we are, an' all acause A'm a Cathlik an' you an' he are Prodesans.

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RAINEY. There's a differs.

MICHAEL. On'y a very little. Look at me. A'm like yerself. A'm a workin' man. A want t' marry an' have a wife an' childher an' keep them an' me dacently, an' A want t'sarve God in the way A wus brought up. You don't want no more nor that.

TOM. Ay, indeed, that's true. People are all the same the wurl over. They jus' want t'be let alone.

HUGH. Man, da, whin A'm out wi' Mickey, A sometimes think what a fine thing it 'ud be if the workin' men o' Irelan' was to join their han's thegither an' try an' make a great country o' it. There wus a time whin Irelan' wus the islan' o' saints. By God, da, if we cud bring that time back again.

RAINEY. It's a gran' dream.

MICHAEL. To see the streets full o' happy men an' weemen again, their faces shinin' wi' the glory o' the Lord God, an' the childher runnin' about in the sun an' none o' them sick wi' hunger. Aw, if on'y we wud hould thegither an' not be led astray be people that want to keep us apart.

RAINEY. It'll nivir be.

(Enter MRS. RAINEY.)

MICHAEL. Why not ?

RAINEY. There's such a quare differs atween a Cathlik an' a Prodesan ?

MRS. RAINEY. Och, sure what differs does it make so long as ye act up til yer religion.

(Enter NORA.)

MICHAEL. That's the God's truth, Mrs. Rainey. When a man's livin' at his best, it dussn't matter how much he starts differently thrum other people that's doin' the same—he gits quare an' like them in the end.

RAINEY. There's a differs.

NORA. Dear, oh, dear, are ye still wranglin' wi' one another ? What ones men are fur talkin'.

MRS. RAINEY (*pulling her down beside her on the sofa*). Nivir mind, dear, let them go on talkin'. It keeps them quiet.

ACT II

The SCENE is the same as in Act I. A week has elapsed. It is the late afternoon. MRS. RAINEY is baking bread, there is a "griddle" on the fire, on which lie four baking soda-farls. Every now and then MRS. RAINEY leaves the baking-board and goes to the griddle to attend to the farls there.

(Her son HUGH enters.)

MRS. RAINEY. Is that you, Hughie ?

HUGH. Ay. *(He draws a chair up to the fire, and takes off his boots. His Mother places a pair of carpet slippers by his chair. He puts them on.)* Where's me da ?

MRS. RAINEY. He's away out somewhere. He didden say where he wus goan an' A didden ask.

HUGH. Man-a-dear, he spoke quare an' well the day at the Steps. There wus quare cheers fur him whin he got down aff the chair.

MRS. RAINEY. Yer father wus alwis a good speaker.

HUGH. It'll be a fine thing fur him t'be able t'say he wus the man that give bigotry it's death in Bilfast. The workin'-class 'll nivir be the same again. They know now that it dussen matter whether yer a Cathlik or a Prodesan, if ye're a workin' man ye're bein' groun' down be the masters.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, now, Hughie, the masters is not as bad as they're made out t'be. Sure, it's no good callin' people bad names. It's alwis bin like this, an' ye can't expec' people t' change sudden. If ye wur brought up, like them ye'd be the same as they are.

HUGH. They haven't got the troubles we hav. They nivir see their childher starvin', do they ?

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, perhaps, they don't git their

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trouble jus' like that, but they get it all the same. It's jus' a wee bit different on the outside. Wud ye like a wee drap o'tay an' a bit o' new bread ?

HUGH. A'll wait till ye have it yerself.

MRS. RAINEY. A'll not be long now—the bread's near done.

(She bends over the "griddle," turning the fairs, and now and then stands them on their sides so as to brown them all over. Some, baked, she removes. Her son watches her for a while as if anxious to speak to her, but undecided how to begin. She carries the last fair to the table.)

HUGH. Will A take the griddle aff fur ye ?

MRS. RAINEY. Ay if ye plase. Put it in the scullery.

(He takes the "griddle" out and when he returns stands beside her as she batches the bread.)

MRS. RAINEY. Wur ye wantin' t' say anythin' to me, Hughie ?

HUGH *(moving away)*. Naw. *(He looks at the fire for a second or two, then turns swiftly to his mother, and puts his arms round her neck.)* Ma, wud ye be vexed if A wus to marry Nora Murray ?

(She pats him gently.)

MRS. RAINEY. Vexed, dear ?

HUGH. Ay. She's a Cathlik.

MRS. RAINEY. A wudden be vexed at yer marryin' her. A like her quare an' well.

HUGH. But ye wudden like me t' marry a Cathlik ?

MRS. RAINEY. A wus wunnerin', Hughie. It's strange t' think ye shud be wantin' t' marry a-tall. Its—ye wur a wee lad—Ye're a man, Hughie. A har'ly know that yit

HUGH. It's nacherl fur a man t' marry.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, its nacherl. It is indeed ! But ye wudden belave the strange it is for all that. A wus a young girl when A had you, Hughie, younger nor Nora, an' A wus quare an proud o' ye. A . . . *(She sobs a little.)*

HUGH. A've bin a good son t'ye.

MRS. RAINEY (*drying her tears*). Ye have, dear. Ye have that. A'm not complainin'. It's the way o' things.

HUGH. Ye'll not be vexed wi' me.

MRS. RAINEY (*smiling and kissing him*). Vexed wi' ye. Sure, no. What wud A be vexed fur? It's yer father.

HUGH. Ay, A wunner how he'll take it?

MRS. RAINEY. Ye're very fond o' her aren't ye, Hughie?

HUGH. Ay!

MRS. RAINEY. It wud hurt ye not til marry her.

HUGH. It wud.

MRS. RAINEY. Mebbe if ye wur t' tell him that

HUGH. She's not goan t' change her religion, an' A'm not goan t' change mine. If there's any childher

MRS. RAINEY. That'll be the test, Hughie.

HUGH. We'll let them choose fur themselves whin they're oul' enough. Aw, Ma, half the religion in the wurl' is like a disease that ye get thrum yer father. A'm a Prodesan acause you an' me da are Prodesans, an' Nora's a Cathlik acause her parents wur Cathliks; an' you and he are Prodesans acause your da and ma wur Prodesans, an' they wur Cathliks acause their parents wur Cathliks. A'd like a time til come when a man wus a Cathlik or a Prodesan acause he felt in his sowl it wus the right thing til be.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, indeed. But man, Hughie, whin ye come til bring up yer childher, it's quare how ye don't think like that. Its all right fur you an' her—ye're separate ye see; but it's different wi' childher. Ye can't say, this chile's me an' that chile's her. They're jus' like as if ye wur both lumped thegither. It's very difficult

HUGH. Ye're not goan back on me, are ye?

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, Hughie, A'm not. A'm on'y tellin' ye that it's not as aisy as ye think it is.

HUGH (*putting his arm round her neck*). Ma, A just love her.

MRS. RAINEY. A know, dear.

HUGH. It's like Huh, A dunna how t'say it. It grips ye, an ye can't houl' out. Aw, an' it hurts

Mixed Marriage

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, it hurts

HUGH. Ye're a quare good wumman, ma. Sometimes A think if it wussen fur you A'd nivir a stapped here wi' him. He's that hard.

(A knock is heard on the door and the voice of MICHAEL O'HARA cries, "Can A come in?")

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, come on.

(Enter MICHAEL.)

MICHAEL. How are ye all ?

MRS. RAINEY. Ah, sure we're rightly.

MICHAEL. Is Mr. Rainey in ?

HUGH. Naw, he's out somewhere.

MICHAEL. Man, Hughie, we'll have til be quare an careful. That wee man Hart 's bin tryin' t' rouse the Or'ngemen agin the Cathliks. There wus a bit o' a fight last night in North Street, an' a chap cursed the Pope.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, dear-a-dear, what harm did the poor man do him that he should go an' curse him ?

MICHAEL. Ay, indeed, ye're right. There's goan t'be a meetin' o' the Or'ngemen the night; an' Hart'll be there stirrin' up bad blood. We must get yer father t' go an' stap him.

HUGH. Aw, he'll go all right. His blood's up ye know. Once ye set him talkin' it's hard t' stap him. Man, ye did the right thing whin ye toul' him he might be the man til bring bigotry til an end. That plazed him greatly.

MICHAEL. We mussen let thim git fightin, thegither. If we can keep them thegither a while in peace, we'll git what we want thrum the masters; but if they once start fightin' thegither about religion, we'll git nathin. There'll be a riot—

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, God forbid. A remember the riot in 1883. Aw, dear-a-dear.

HUGH. Did ye see Nora as ye wur comin' up the street ?

MICHAEL. Ay, a saw her goan intil a shap as A wus comin' along.

HUGH. Did ye spake til her ?

MICHAEL. A toul' her A wus comin' here, an' she toul'

me t' tell ye she'd be here herself afore long. Is Tom home yit ?

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, he's out in the yard washin' it down.

MICHAEL. A wondher if he'd go an' fin' yer father, Hugh ? Man, we mussen waste a minute.

HUGH (*going to the scullery-door*). Here, Tom ; come on in a minit.

TOM (*from the yard*). What d'ye want ?

HUGH. A want ye a minit.

(TOM, *in his shirt sleeves and with his trousers turned up, enters, carrying a broom.*

TOM. What is it ? . . . Aw, Micky, how're ye ?

MICHAEL. Tom, will ye go an' try an' fin' yer father fur us ?

TOM. Sure, A doan know where he is.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, ye'll fin' him as likely as not at the corner o' the Shankill.

TOM. A haven't finished the yard.

MRS. RAINEY. Hughie 'll do that.

TOM. Why can't he go ?

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, now, doan't ask no questions an' A'll tell ye no lies. Sure, Nora's comin' in in a minit.

TOM. Well, what's that got t' do wi' it ?

MICHAEL. Gw'on, Tom. A want t' talk t' Hughie fur a while.

TOM. That's the way. All o' ye shovin' ivirything ontill me. Lord save us, ye'd think A wus a chile. Me da talks t' me as if A wus a babby.

MRS. RAINEY. Now, Tom, ye know ye're just wantin' t' go, but ye're that contrairy ye pretend ye don't.

TOM. Huh ! Here gimme me coat an' cap.

(MRS. RAINEY *fetches his coat and cap for him, and he puts himself tidy.*

MICHAEL. Tell him it's quare an' pertickler, Tom.

TOM. Ay ! (*He goes out*).

HUGH. A've toul' me ma about Nora.

MICHAEL. Eh !

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MRS. RAINEY. It's all right, Micky. A'm not the soart o' wumman til git annoyed at the like o' that.

MICHAEL. A know ye're not, Mrs. Rainey. Ye're a fine wumman.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, hou! yer tongue wi' ye.

MICHAEL. Does yer father know?

HUGH. Naw, not yit.

MICHAEL. D'ye think he'll min'?

HUGH. A don't know. A'm afeard

MRS. RAINEY. He's a very headstrong man

MICHAEL. What d'ye think he'd do if he knew?

HUGH. A don't care what he does.

MICHAEL. Ye shudden talk like that, Hugh. Supposin' he wus to turn agin ye!

HUGH. Let him turn. Me ma won't turn agin me.

MICHAEL. It mightn't be agin you on'y though?

HUGH. Eh!

MICHAEL. He might turn agin the Cathliks too?

MRS. RAINEY. Ye mane he mightn't help ye wi' the strack?

MICHAEL. Ay, that's just what A mane. Man, Hughie, we mussen run no risks. When wur ye goan t' tell him?

HUGH. A wus goan t' tell him the day. He knows A go out wi' her, an' that A'm not the soart o' fella that goes up the road wi' a girl jus' t' pass the time.

MRS. RAINEY. He's bin askin' questions about her.

(NORA *knocks at the door, which is opened by* MRS. RAINEY.

Aw, sure come on in. We wur jus' talkin' about ye.

NORA (*entering*). Wur ye, indeed? Well, A suppose ye wur pullin' me to' bits?

HUGH. Ay, we just tuk all the character ye have away thrum ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Nora, Hughie's just toul' me about you an' him

NORA (*quickly*). Oh, Mrs. Rainey!

MRS. RAINEY. It's all right, dear. A'm very glad.
(*She kisses* NORA.)

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MICHAEL. We wur just talkin' about tellin' Mr. Rainey, an' wunnerin' what he'll say ?

MRS. RAINEY. Ye'd better not tell him til the strack's over. Then ye'll be sure he can't do no harm.

MICHAEL. A wus goan til suggest that, on'y A didden like.

HUGH. Mebbe it wud be as well. Sure it 'll on'y be a week or two.

MRS. RAINEY. Now, ye can go on intil the yard you two, the pair o' ye, and finish clanin' it, an' me an' Nora 'll have a wee crack thegither.

HUGH. Aw, there ye are, ye see. As soon as ivir two weemen git thegither the men have t' go out fur fear they'd be deaved wi' the talkin'.

NORA. Aw, indeed, if we didden talk thegither, A'm sure A don't know what 'ud become o' the men ?

MRS. RAINEY. Ye're right, Nora. It's the weemen that keeps the men thegither if they on'y knew it ?

MICHAEL. Aw, now, don't talk blether.

MRS. RAINEY. Go long wi' ye !

(MICHAEL and HUGH go out laughing.)

NORA. Are ye angry wi' me, Mrs. Rainey ?

MRS. RAINEY. No, Nora, A'm not angry. What wud A be angry fur ?

NORA. Me bein' a Cathlik.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, dear, ye cudden help that annymore nor Hughie cud help bein' a Prodesan. A wud be very angry if ye wurn't able til luk after him.

NORA. A'll do that all right.

MRS. RAINEY. Men make a quare fuss about religion an' wan thing an' another, but A'm thinkin' it's more important fur a wumman t' be able t' make a good dinner fur her man nor t' be able t' pray in the same church. A'm sure it's the same God anyway.

NORA. A'll be a good wife t' Hugh.

MRS. RAINEY. A know ye will. It makes a quare differs to a man that. It's a strange thing marriage.

NORA. Are ye sorry ye're married ?

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MRS. RAINEY. No, A'm not. Me an' my man has had our ups an' downs, an' he's a bit domineerin', but A think A'd do it again if A had me life over again. They're strange at first, an' they're not very considerate. They don't ondherstan' weemen . . . but ye git to ondherstan' them soon enough. Ye know, they're quare oul' humbugs when ye know them. They think they're that clivir, an' they make us think it too, at first ; but sure, ye soon fin' them out. Och, dear, they're jus' like big childher. When Hughie wus a chile, he wus quare an' strong, an' there wus times afore he cud walk whin A cud har'ly houl' him, he wud twist about in me arms that much, an' sometimes A thought the chile imagined he wus more nor me match ; but ye know, dear, A wus takin' care o' him all the time. It wus sore work sometimes, an' his da nivir seemed to ondherstan' that A got tired out ; but sure, A jus' did it all right. It's the same wi' my man. He twists about an' thinks he's the quare big strong man, but A'm jus' takin' care o' him the same as A did o' Hughie whin he wus a chile. Ye'll have t' do the same, Nora : it's the way o' the wurl' wi' weemen.

NORA. It's the quare strange thing a man is. A've felt that meself. Sometimes when A'm up the road wi' Hughie, an' A'm listenin' to him talkin', A think t' meself A'm quare an' beneath him ; but jus' when A'm beginnin' t' feel downhearted about it, he'll mebbe say somethin', an' A know then that A'm not beneath him a-tall, that A'm . . . A don't know how t' say it. . . . It's a quare feelin'.

MRS. RAINEY. A know, A know. Ivry wumman has it sometime or other. Ye jus' feel that men are not near as clivir as they think they are, an' ye're not sarry fur it.

NORA. Ay, ye feel quare an' glad. Ye wud think mebbe ye'd be disappointed at fin'in' them out ; but ye're not.

MRS. RAINEY. They're jus' childher. Manny a time, whin A'm sittin' here darnin' the socks, A think that God made us acause He saw what a chile a man is. He jus' made us til luk after them

NORA. A often think that about Hughie. There's times an' times whin A jus' want t' gether him up in me arms, an' houl' him til me tight, an' putt him t' sleep

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, Ay! An' yer chile hurts ye thrum the minit it's born til the minit it dies. It's not like that wi' a man, dear. A man's nivir tied til a chile like a wumman. Ye have t' break the cord til separate them. It's different in a man. He can take a pride in his chile. If it does well, his pride is plazed, an' if it doesn't his pride is hurt; but a wumman feels it tuggin' inside her Aw, dear, dear, what are we talkin' like this fur? Sure, the men'll be in in a minit, an' we'll have til take care o' them, an' not be worryin' about wurselves.

NORA. Will A go an' see if they're finished in the yard yit?

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, do.

(NORA kisses her, and MRS. RAINEY hugs the girl to her tightly. NORA goes out by the scullery, and MRS. RAINEY brings an armchair forward to the fire, and begins to darn socks. In a little while the street door opens, and TOM, followed by his father, enters.)

TOM. Here's me da.

RAINEY. Ay, A hear they want me.

MRS. RAINEY. Yes. They're out in the yard now. Tom, tell them.

(TOM goes to the scullery and calls the others in. Nora Murray's wi' them.)

RAINEY. What's she doin' there?

MRS. RAINEY. She jus' come in til have a crack wi' me.

RAINEY. Huh! It's a funny way o' havin' it fur her t' be out in the yard wi' Hughie, an' you t' be darnin' socks in the kitchen.

MRS. RAINEY. We've had it, man, dear. Weemin dussen take s' long over their talkin' as men?

(Enter TOM, NORA, MICHAEL, and HUGH in the order named.)

NORA. Good-evenin', Mr. Rainey.

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RAINEY (*shortly*). Good-evenin'. (To MICHAEL). Ye wur wantin' me ?

MICHAEL. A wus.

NORA. A'll have t' be goin' now.

MRS. RAINEY. Sure, ye're in no hurry. Stap an' take a drap o' tay wi' us.

NORA. Aw, indeed, A must go home.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye're sure ?

NORA. A am indeed.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, mebbe, Hughie'll see ye home.

HUGH. A wus jus' goin' t'siggest that.

RAINEY. Sure, it's not dark.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, man-a-dear, don't ye know at this time o' year it gits dark quare an' sudden. A'm sure, Michael wants t' have a quiet talk wi' ye. Tom, A want ye t' go roun' til the grocer's fur me.

(HUGH and NORA get ready to go.)

TOM. Can't Hughie do it on the way back.

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, he can't.

TOM. It's alwis me.

RAINEY. Do as yer ma tells ye, an' don't give no back answers.

TOM. Luk here, da, A'm not goin' til be spoke t' like that.

RAINEY. Hou'l' yer tongue will ye ?

MRS. RAINEY. Tom, dear, come here.

HUGH. Well, we'll go now. A'll be back afore long, Michael.

NORA. Good-night t'ye, Mrs. Rainey

MRS. RAINEY. Good-night t'ye, Nora.

NORA. Good-night t'ye all.

ALL. Good-night.

TOM. Wait a minit, an' A'll come wi' ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, A'm not ready fur ye.

(Exit NORA and HUGH.)

TOM (*quietly to his mother*). Ye might ha' let me go wi' them. It wud ha' bin comp'ny.

MRS. RAINEY (*very quietly*). Haven't ye got no sense, man ?

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MICHAEL. Ye heerd tell o' this meetin' o' the Or'ngemen, A suppose? Hart's comin' thrum Dublin til address it.

RAINEY. Ay, A met the Worshipful Master on the Shankill the day, an' he toul' me about it.

MICHAEL. Hart'll stir up bitterness atween the Cathliks an' the Prodesans if he's let have his way.

MRS. RAINEY. A don't like that wee man.

TOM. He makes his livin' out o' breedin' bigotry.

RAINEY. What d'you know about it? Let me tell you he's a man that's done good work fur the Prodesan' religion.

TOM. It's not good work t' be settin' men fightin' wi' wan another.

RAINEY. Houl' yer tongue. Ye dunna what ye're talkin' about.

TOM. Well, if A'm not wanted here, A'm goin' out. It's no pleasure t' me t' stay here wi' a lotta nirpin' goin' on.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye can jus' go til the grocer's now. (*Pats him on the back.*) Nivir mind, Tom. Sure, he dussen mane half he says. (*She speaks in undertones to Tom, who presently puts on his cap and goes out.*)

MICHAEL. D'ye think ye cud go up til the meetin' Mr. Rainey, the morra, an' counteract Hart's influence? Ye know the men think a lot o' yer opinion.

RAINEY. A might go.

MICHAEL. Ye will, wun't ye? A can't go meself, A'm a Cathlik, an' Hughie can't, he's not an Or'ngeman . . .

MRS. RAINEY. It wud be a pity t' spoil the good effect ye've made at the last minit.

MICHAEL. It wud, indeed, Mrs. Rainey. We're doin' so well . . . Aw, if that man Hart wud on'y stay away? . . . It's enough t' break yer heart whin ye've bin tryin' as hard as ye can til do somethin', an' someone comes whin ye've near done it, an' pushes it over.

RAINEY. Ay, it is that,

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MRS. RAINEY. The quare good work in the wurl' that's bin spoiled be liars an' fools.

MICHAEL. It's tarrible t' think, Mr. Rainey, that you an' me shud be sittin' here doin' wur best t' putt things right, an' all the time there's a man comin' thrum Dublin til spoil it all.

MRS. RAINEY. They're alwis comin', them people, be express trains. They travel quare an' quick.

MICHAEL. Ye won't disappoint us, Mr. Rainey ?

RAINEY. A'll go all right. We'll see who has the most influence, me or Hart ?

MICHAEL. Aw, there's not much doubt about that.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, now ye've done yer talkin' ye'll have til have somethin' til ate. Come on an' help me til lay the table, Michael.

MICHAEL. Sure, an' I will gladly, Mrs. Rainey.

(He gets up and helps her to bring the table forward.)

MRS. RAINEY puts a pair of slippers at her husband's feet.

MRS. RAINEY. Here, let me take yer boots off.

RAINEY. Aw, A'll do that meself.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, g'long wi' ye, ye ould footer. Ye'd be breakin' the laces or somethin'.

(She unlaces his boots, whilst MICHAEL spreads the table-cloth.)

ACT III

It is the late afternoon of the next day. MRS. RAINEY is sitting in the armchair in front of the fire, darning socks. She is singing softly to herself. The street-door opens and her husband enters.

MRS. RAINEY. There ye are, then.

RAINEY. Ay! Where's the lads?

MRS. RAINEY. A don't know. They're out somewhere. Wuv ye spakin' again the day?

RAINEY. A wus spakin' twice the day.

MRS. RAINEY. Man, dear, ye're gettin' the quare orator. Sure, ye'll be in Parliament wan o' these days if ye go on at that rate.

RAINEY (*not displeased*). Aw, now, hould yer wheesht.

MRS. RAINEY (*holding up the socks to view*). But sure ye'll just wear out the socks the same whativir ye are. A nivir saw such an a man for holes in his socks as you in me born days. A'm nivir done mendin'.

RAINEY. Aw, well, sure it's pastime fur ye. Whin ye've nathin' else til do, ye can sit down an' take yer aise an' darn a few socks. It's the quare aisy time weemen has be men.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, indeed, ye know little about it. Will ye be ready fur yer tay yit?

RAINEY. A will in a wee while. Is the washin' come home yit? A must have a clane "dicky" fur the Lodge the night.

MRS. RAINEY. An' what are ye goin' t' do at the Lodge the night?

RAINEY. Sure, didden ye know A wus goin' til spake til the Or'ngemen the night so's til counteract the influence o' that man thrum Dublin.

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MRS. RAINEY. Och, ay, A furgot. Three spaches in wan day . . . aw, dear, dear, what a dale o' argyin' men have til have. Yer washin's on the bed.

RAINEY. A'll jus' go an' putt meself tidy, an' mebbe be the time A come down ye'll have the tay ready?

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, ye're in no hurry fur yer tay. Ye can wait awhile til the others come in. A'm expectin' Mickie an' Nora in wi' Hughie and Tom til tay.

RAINEY. Thon girl's here brave an' often.

MRS. RAINEY. An' what wudden she be here fur? She might as well be here as annywhere else.

RAINEY. Well, mebbe it's all right, but man-a-dear, if A thought anythin' wus comin' out o' it . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Och, man, boys is alwis runnin' after girls. If a boy wus t' be married til iv'ry girl he courted, sure, he'd be a Mormon.

RAINEY. Ay! (*He stands in silence for a moment or two and then crosses to his wife's side.*) It's a quare solemn thing, marriage.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, it's not as solemn as people make out. Sure, we're not solemn?

RAINEY. It's solemn all the same. It's the pickin' an' the choosin' . . . ye have t' be careful. A man an' a wumman ought t' be very much the same afore they marry. Ye have t' live wi' wan another, an' if there's a big differs atween ye, it's quare an' bad.

MRS. RAINEY. Sure, some people are that different thrum each other they nivir find it out.

RAINEY. Aw, but there's some things like religion . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Now, now, religion can take care o' itself. Gw'on an' put on yer dickey fur dear sake, or ye'll be makin' yer three spaches t' me afore A know where A am.

RAINEY (*patting her on the head, and laughing.*) Hey, ye're the funny ould wumman. (*He goes up the stairs.*)

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, an' ye're the funny ould man.

RAINEY (*speaking over the bannisters.*) We're the funny ould couple thegither.

MRS. RAINEY. G'long wi' ye

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RAINEY. We've had the brave times thegither, haven't we ?

MRS. RAINEY. Sure, it's not bin so bad.

RAINEY. An' we'll have the quare good times yit. There's fine work t' be done in the wurl', smoothin' things out. Aw, it's gran', it's gran', an' it's a privilege fur me til be able t' do it.

MRS. RAINEY. Indeed, that's the truth ye're sayin', on'y there's manny a man spoils his work wi' temper.

RAINEY. A'm not a bad-tempered man. A'm the most considerate man ye cud think o'. Luk at the way A let them Cathliks come intil the house, an' me own son walkin' up the road wi' one o' them. Ye wudden call that bigited wud ye ?

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, that's not much. Sometimes ye have til choose atween yer work an' yer life. It wud be the quare bad thing til choose yer life.

RAINEY. Ay! (*He comes down the stairs again and stands before the fire*).

MRS. RAINEY. D'ye think ye'd let anythin' stan' atween ye an' the work ye're goin' t' do ?

RAINEY. It's a gran' work, t' make peace. Aw, when ye come t' think o' it, it's awful the way the wurl's bin goin' on up til now. Men fightin' wi' wan another, an' prosperin' out o' wan another's misfortune. War all the time.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, an' the wurl' not a ha'penny the better fur it.

RAINEY. Ye're right. Ye're right. Ye are, indeed. An' ye've on'y got til putt out yer han's til wan another, an' grip them, an' it's all over.

MRS. RAINEY. An' yer enemy issen yer enemy a-tall. Aw, that's quare, t' be seein' enemies where there is no enemies.

RAINEY. Ay!

MRS. RAINEY. A wondher what ye'd do if ye wur in a fix atween yer religion an' yer desire t' make peace. Somethin' wud have t' give way.

RAINEY. Aw, A'd do the right thing, A can tell ye. (*He*

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goes up the stairs.) Ye can trust me. A'm not a chile. A've got a bit o' wit in me head, A can tell ye. A'm not the one til be misled.

(The door opens hurriedly and TOM enters in excitement.)

TOM. Hi, ma, come on quick. Ye're wanted.

MRS. RAINEY. Whativir's the matter wi' ye?

RAINEY *(from the stairs)*. Can't ye control yerself, an' not be runnin' about like a wil' thing.

TOM. It's Mickey! He's got his head cut open.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, Lord bliss us.

RAINEY. What's that ye say?

TOM. A lot o' wee lads wus singin' a party tune, an' cursin' the Pope, an' he tould thim they shudden do the like o' that, an' a drunk man wus goin' by, an' hit him on the head wi' a belt. He's in Martin's shop. Come on quick, an' luk after him. Sure, he'll bleed til death.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, now, don't put yerself out s' much. Sure, people don't bleed til death as aisy as that. Get me me shawl fur dear sake.

RAINEY. That's bigotry fur ye. A man has t' be drunk afore he'd do the like o' that.

TOM. Be the luk o' the people in this town, an' the way they go on, ye'd think they wur alwis drunk. Here's ver shawl, ma. Come on, quick.

MRS. RAINEY. Did ye go fur the doctor?

TOM. Naw.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, why didden ye go fur him afore ye come fur me. Run now, will ye, an' A'll go on til Martin's?

(Exit TOM.)

RAINEY. That's right. Poor lad, bring him back here. Will A come wi' ye?

MRS. RAINEY. Now, what wud ye do that fur? Ye'd be makin' spaches til the doctor, an' gettin' in the way. Gw'on an' put on yer dickey, an' try an' be dacent-lukkin' whin A come back.

RAINEY. That drunk man ought t' be putt in jail.

MRS. RAINEY. There's many does worse nor him whin they're not drunk, an' they're putt in Parliament. A wun't be long. *(She goes out quickly.)*

(RAINEY stands on the stairs for a while in thought, and then goes up to the bedroom, shutting the door noisily behind him. There is quiet in the kitchen for a little while; then the door opens and HUGH and NORA enter.)

HUGH. Sure, come on in.

NORA. Och, no, A wun't come in now.

HUGH. Och, come on. There's no wan in. *(He goes to the scullery and shouts into the yard.)* Are ye in, ma? *(As there is no response, he returns to the kitchen.)* Sure, ye might as well stay now ye're here. A expect me ma's just away out til the shop.

NORA. Is yer da in?

HUGH. Aw, he's out somewhere, A s'pose. He's quarely taken on wi' the notion o' spakin'. Sure, he'll be goin' on makin' spaches fur ivir if wur not careful, jus' like wan o' them men ye see in the market sellin' ould clo'es, or a member o' Parliament on the Twelfth o' July, whin he's half drunk an' near out o' his min' wi' the noise o' the drums.

NORA. Aw, now, ye shudden be makin' fun o' yer da.

HUGH. A'm not makin' no fun o' him. A'm beginnin' t' respect him.

NORA. Och, but sure ye alwis did that ivir since ye wur a wee lad that height. *(She lets her hand fall to the level of her knee.)*

HUGH. Naw, A wus afeard o' him; but A'm beginnin' t' respect him. It's a quare thing that whin a man begins t' respect his da. Sure, sit down.

NORA *(sitting down on the sofa)*. Hughie. *(She takes him by the hand and he sits down beside her.)* D'ye think yer da' ll be very angry about you an' me?

HUGH. A suppose he'll storm an' rave awhile, but sure if he sees we're determined he'll give way an' make the best o' it. It's no good shoutin' at what ye can't help.

Mixed Marriage

NORA. Ye won't let him separate us, Hughie ?

HUGH. Separate us. Naw, A wun't let him do that. Man, dear, it wud take a quare man til separate us now.

NORA. An' ye wun't let them tempt ye ? . . .

HUGH. What wud they tempt me wi', fur dear sake ?

NORA. Mebbe they'll be tellin' ye t' lave me fur the sake o' Irelan'. Aw, A know, A know they'll do it. Mickie'll try. Sure, he dussen care what happens s'long as his plans fur Irelan' is all right. He'd sacrifice his own da an' ma fur that.

HUGH. It's fine t' have a spirit like that. Not til let anythin' come atween ye an' the thing ye want.

NORA. Wud ye give me up, Hughie, fur Irelan' ?

HUGH. Naw, A wudden.

(She clutches him tightly to her.)

NORA. Aw, my man, A cudden let ye go. A'd hould on til ye if the wurl' wus til fall in anondher wur feet if A didden let go. *(She kisses him eagerly.)* A don't care fur nathin' but you . . .

HUGH. A love ye, too, Nora.

NORA. A'm ashamed til be talkin' like this, but A can't help it. A'd let Irelan' go til hell fur ye, Hugh.

HUGH. Aw, don't be sayin' that.

NORA. It's true, it's true! When A think mebbe they'll take ye thrum me A go near mad wi' fear.

HUGH. They'll nivir do that. *(He puts his arms tightly around her.)* It's a quare fine thing t' be in love wi' you.

NORA. Sometimes whin A'm thinkin' about it A can't ondherstan' it. A'm just like a man wi' somethin' inside him that wants t' come out, an' can't fin' the way. Ye know what A mane, don't ye ? A want til tell ye, but A don't know how, an' A just stan' still wi' me tongue clackin' in me mouth like a dumb man's.

(The door of the bedroom opens and RAINEY appears at the top of the stairs. He is dressed in his Sunday clothes. At the sound of the voices he stops and listens.)

A want til tell iv'rybuddy A'm in love wi' ye, an' goin'

t' marry ye. A feel prouder nor the King o' Englan' or the Lord Mayor o' Bilfast. (*He jumps up excitedly and drags her up beside him.*)

(RAINEY descends a few steps, quietly, listening.)
There'll not be a happier man in Irelan' nor me when A'm married t' ye, da or no da. (*He kisses her again and holds her closely to him.*)

RAINEY. What's that ye say ?

(*They start apart from one another, and look up at the old man, who regards them silently, and then, without speaking, descends into the kitchen.*)

Did A hear ye sayin' ye wur goin' til marry this wumman.

HUGH. Ye did !

RAINEY (*to NORA*). Ye're goin' til take him, A s'pose ?

NORA. A am.

RAINEY. Ye're a Cathlik aren't ye ?

NORA. Yes, A am.

RAINEY. Issen it agin yer religion t' marry a Prodesan ?

NORA. It can be done, but A don't care.

RAINEY. Will ye turn Prodesan if ye marry him ?

NORA. Naw, A wun't.

HUGH. An' A'll not ask her nayther. What call wud she have til do the like o' that when she belaves in it ?

RAINEY. If she belaves in it, what does she want wi' a man that dussen, will ye tell me that ?

HUGH. It's acause A care fur her, an' she cares fur me . . .

RAINEY. What's carin' til yer sowl, man. If ye damn yerself in the nixt wurl' for the pleasure o' a wumman in this, what good'll that do ye ? Man, man, think what ye're doin'.

HUGH. A've made up me min', da.

RAINEY. Ye're goin' til marry her ?

HUGH. Ay, A am.

RAINEY. Aw, what a fool A've bin. (*To NORA.*) Ye trapped me nicely. A wus t' be the tool in yer han's, an' do yer work fur ye, an' whin A wussen lukkin' ye wur t' marry me son. You an' that man O'Hara . . . aw, what

Mixed Marriage

a fool A've bin. They wur right whin they said the strack was a Papish plot (*furiously*). Aw, wumman, git oura me house, will ye, afore A strack ye down ?

HUGH. My God, da, if ye touch her, A'll brain ye.

RAINEY (*calming himself with a great effort*). Ay, ye've learned yer lesson well. Ye've turned agin yer own father That's her, A s'pose ?

NORA. Indeed, indeed, A nivr . . .

RAINEY. Don't spake til me, wumman.

HUGH. Don't talk til her like that. She's not the dirt aneath yer feet.

RAINEY (*to NORA, quietly*). Ye know ye'd nivr be happy thegither. Ye ought t' marry a man o' yer own faith It's not right t'be marryin' out o' yer religion.

NORA. A want him . . .

HUGH. An' A want her, too. An' A'll not give her up.

RAINEY. What 'ud be the good o' ye marryin'. Yer frien's'll forsake ye. (*To NORA.*) All yer own people'll cast ye off acause ye married a Prodesan, an' A'll nivr own him fur a son if he marries a Cathlik.

HUGH. A can't help that.

RAINEY (*to NORA*). Ye wudden ruin him, wud ye ? Ye'd be turnin' him agin his people.

NORA. A'd be havin' him meself.

RAINEY. Are ye thinkin' on'y o' yerself ? Have ye no thought fur no wan else ? There's no love where there's selfishness.

HUGH. What are you thinkin' of ? On'y an ould superstition. Ye've somethin' in yer min' about Cathliks an' Prodesans, an' ye're thinkin' o' that all the time. Ye're not thinkin' o' her an' me, an' ye don't care about us bein' happy. Ye're alwis batin' an Or'nge drum.

RAINEY. That's the quare disrespectful way t' spake t' yer father. A brought ye intil the wurl' an' rared ye well, an' this is the thanks A git.

HUGH. Sure, A didden ask ye t' bring me intil the wurl ?

RAINEY. A've bin a good father t'ye.

HUGH. D'ye want credit fur that ? Sure, ye had t'be

Ye did what ye had t'do an' ye expect me t' have no will o' me own in return fur it. Ye've bullied me since A wus a chile.

RAINEY. A've not bullied ye. A've bin starn wi' ye fur yer own good.

HUGH. Luk at the way ye talk t' Tom. He daren't open his mouth fur ye, but what ye call him out o' his name, an' make him luk like a fool afore strangers. D'ye want t' know why we've stud it so long? It's not fur your sake, but acause o' me ma. We'd agone long ago if it hadden bin fur her. Yer starnness an' yer good trainin' wus on'y bullyin', that's all it wus.

RAINEY. There's no good talkin' t' ye, ye've bin led astray. A'll ask this wumman if she's satisfied wi' what she's done. (*To NORA*). Ye've turned him again his father, an' made him say things til me that he'll rue til his dyin' day. A wondher if ye're satisfied?

NORA. Aw, ye're a hard man, Mr. Rainey. Ye know A've nivir said a word again ye. A've alwis stud up fur ye.

RAINEY. Will ye give him up?

NORA. Ye want me t' do somethin' A can't do. He's the on'y man A ivir thought of. A can't give him up. A need him.

RAINEY. It's a terrible thing fur a wumman til come atween a man an' his parents.

HUGH. Sure, they're doin' it iv'ry day.

NORA (*to MR. RAINEY*). A'll be a good wife til him. A will, indeed. Ye'll nivir regret lettin' him marry me?

RAINEY. A'm not lettin' him. He's doin' it wi'out me will.

NORA. Aw, but ye will let him, wun't ye?

RAINEY. If ye'll turn Prodesan A will.

NORA. Naw, A wun't do that. A can't give up me religion.

RAINEY. Can't ye give up him, then?

NORA. A can't give him up ayther.

RAINEY. Then A've no more t' say. He'll lave this

house the night onless he gives ye up. A can't have him here.

NORA. Aw, don't say that, Mr. Rainey.

RAINEY. A don't want no more t' say t'ye. A've done wi' ye. Ye've putt anger in me son again me.

HUGH. A don't care. It'll be no grief til me til lave the house. A'm a man, an' not a chile, an' A'll choose me wife where A like, an' not where you like. A'm not afeard.

RAINEY. Them that dishonours their father an' their mother'll rue it in the Last Day.

HUGH. A'm not afeard. A'll git lodgin's the night. A'll not trouble ye wi' me comp'ny anny longer. (NORA weeps helplessly.) Don't be cryin', dear. Sure, this is on'y a bit o' bother that'll not last fur ivir. We knew it 'ud have t' come some time. It's no good complainin' acause it's come sooner nor we thought. We'll be married the quicker.

(The door opens and MRS. RAINEY, followed by TOM and MICHAEL, enters.)

MRS. RAINEY (to MICHAEL). Now, come on in an' rest yerself. (To her husband.) Fur dear sake, what's the matter wi' ye. Ye'd think ye'd seen a ghost ye're that white.

RAINEY (pointing to MICHAEL). Sen' that Fenian out o' my house.

MRS. RAINEY. Eh!

RAINEY (with great anger). A say, sen' that Fenian out o' my house, A tell ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, ye're not right the day. Ye're beside yerself wi' all that spache-makin'. Take no notis o' him, Mickie, but come on in an' lie down on the sofa, fur sure indeed it's a long rest ye're needin' more nor annythin' else.

RAINEY. D'ye hear me, wumman? A'll have no Fenians here.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye must be crazed, man. What's the matter wi' ye? Tom, git yer father a drink o' watter.

RAINEY. Sit down an' listen t' me, an' mebbe ye'll ondherstan' what A mane. Hugh's goin' til marry that girl.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, dear, that's a dreadful thing, issen it ?

RAINEY. Ay, it is. She's a Cathlik.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, is that all. A thought be the way ye wur talkin' she wus a murderer an' a brute baste rowled intil wan.

RAINEY. It's quaren funny, issen it ?

MRS. RAINEY. A wondher if ye'll ivir larn anny sense ? What differs does it make what religion she is, s'long as she's a good wife til him. D'ye think if A cudden cook yer dinner fur ye an' keep the house clane an' bring yer childher up, it 'ud be anny consolation t'ye that A wus a Prodesan. A can see ye goin' about the house, an' it all dirty, tellin' yerself it dussen matter about the muck acause yer wife's a good Or'ngewumman. Och, man, don't talk blether.

RAINEY. Ye wud think t'hear you, the on'y thing in the wurl' that matters is atin'.

MRS. RAINEY. It's all that matters wi' most men. Sit down, now, an' try an' be sensible. Shut the door, Tom, an' keep the draught off Michael. Sit down all o' ye. Come here, Mickie, an' sit be the fire. (*To RAINEY*). Luk at his head. That's what you quare intelligent men do til show the clivir ye are. Aw, there's times when a wumman's sick o' men an' their folly. Can't ye go through the wurl' without hammerin' wan another like bastes o' the fiel'.

RAINEY. Ye're on his side.

MRS. RAINEY. A'm on no side. A wumman has no right t' be choosin' sides. There's right wi' iv'ry man, an' there's wrong, too. A'm fur him, an' A'm fur you, too. Ye're both right, an' ye're both wrong, but sure ye're just the same t' me whether ye are or not. How are ye now, Mickie ?

MICHAEL. A'm all right, thank ye. Mebbe, A'd better be goin' ?

MRS. RAINEY. Ye'll stay where ye are. Now, what's the bother wi' ye all ?

RAINEY. A come down the stairs an' A saw him kissin' her.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye'd no business t' be watchin'.

RAINEY. A wussen watchin'. A didden know they wur there. A heerd him tellin' her he wud marry her after the strack wus over.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, that's sensible enough. Ye wudden have him marry her while it's on, wud ye ?

RAINEY. A don't want him til marry her a-tall.

HUGH. It's not what you want . . .

RAINEY. Don't spake t' me again. Ye're no son o' mine.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, now, ye can't cut off yer relations like that. He's yer son whether ye like it or not.

RAINEY. A wun't own him.

HUGH. Nobuddy wants ye to.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, now, Hughie, don't be talkin' t' him like that. Sure, he's yer father.

HUGH. That's no rayson why he should bully me.

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, but it's an excuse. Mebbe, ye'll be like it yerself wan day ?

TOM. Lord save us, there's alwis a row goin' on in this house.

RAINEY. Hould yer tongue, will ye ? Don't let a word out o' yer head. A've enough trouble on me min' wi' out you addin' til it.

MRS. RAINEY. Does it ivir occur til ye, John, that Tom's not a wee lad anny more ? He's a brave big fella, now.

RAINEY. He has no wit.

TOM. Ay, A have. A lot more'n ye think, on'y ye nivir let me git a word out o' me, but ye near snap the head o' me. A'm gettin' quaren tired o' it, A tell ye.

RAINEY. Ay, you'll be lavin' me, too. That's the way. Bring up yer childher well, an' spare them nathin', an' they'll turn on ye in yer ould age.

MRS. RAINEY. Mebbe, if ye wur a wee bit more o' a

frien' til them, an' a wee bit less o' a father, they wudden turn on ye so readily. Ye're alwis wantin' til make them do things acause ye're their father, instid o' waitin' fur them til do it o' their own free will.

HUGH. Ye may as well know all, ma. A've bin turned out. A'm goin' t' luk fur lodgin's.

MRS. RAINEY. Who's turned ye out ?

HUGH. Me da.

MRS. RAINEY. What right had he t' turn ye out ?

RAINEY. A'm master o' this house, amn't A ?

MRS. RAINEY. No, ye're not. There's no master here. It's my house, as much as yours. Ye didden ask my lave til turn him out, an' ye wun't git it. D'ye hear ? If ye turn him out, ye turn me out, too ?

TOM. Ay, an' me.

RAINEY. Ay, ye're all agin me, but A'll do me duty. A'm agin a man marryin' out o' his religion, an' A'll stick til that no matter what happens. (*To NORA, who is crying*). Ay, ye may well cry. Ye've brought great trouble on this house. A might ha' known that whin A mixed meself up wi' Cathliks. There's no good can come o' that. Ye wur all quaren clivir, wurn't ye ? Ye wudden say nathin' about this til after the strack. Ye'd use me fur yer purposes, an' be stabbin' me in the back all the time.

MICHAEL. There nivir wus no thought o' that in my min'. If ye think this is plasin' til me, Mr. Rainey, ye're quaren mistaken. A saw a chance o' unitin' the people o' Irelan' again, an' A've worked fur it an' suffered fur it. Man, man, what's your grief til mine ? You're thinkin' o' a son, an' A'm thinkin' o' a nation. Man, ye wun't let this stan' in the way. Think o' the gran' wurk ye wur goin' til do.

RAINEY. A've done wi' it.

MICHAEL. Naw, naw. Ye can't go back now. Sure, there's many waitin' fur a sign thrum you. We've set wur hopes on ye. Ye're not goin' til destroy them, are ye ?

RAINEY. A've done wi' it, A've done wi' it.

Mixed Marriage

MRS. RAINEY. Man, ye don't know what ye're sayin'. Ye wudden stap now, wud ye, whin ye've near done the work ?

RAINEY. A tell ye A've done wi' it.

MICHAEL. Mr. Rainey, think fur a minit. Ye know this is just the critical time. A strong man can do what he he likes wi' the people now. They're in the half-an'-half state. Ye can make them wurk thegither or ye can make them fight thegither. You're the man can do that. Hart hassen got the influence you have. Anythin' he does, you can undo aisily. He's goin' about now talkin' o' Popery an' priest-rule, an' urgin' the Prodesans til break the strack acause it's directed be Cathliks. S'long as you stick up fur us, there's an answer til that, but if ye desert us, there's none, an' all the good we've done will be destroyed.

RAINEY. A belave that man Hart's right.

MICHAEL. What !

RAINEY. A belave he's right. It is a Papish plot, the strack. How can A belave anythin' else whin A see it goin' on in me own house. Me son taken thrum me be a Papish wumman !

MICHAEL. Aw, man, ye don't mane that ?

RAINEY. A do.

MICHAEL. Ye'll not ondo iv'rything fur the sake o' that ?

RAINEY. A'll do no more. A've done wi' it all. A'm not goin' till the Or'nge Hall the night.

MICHAEL. Aw, but ye've promised.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye can't go back on yer word.

RAINEY. A can, an' A will.

HUGH. It's a mane thing t' do. Ye think ye'll stap Nora an' me thrum marryin' acause o' the strack, but ye wun't.

NORA. Aw, A nivir thought o' that.

MICHAEL. Will ye go if they give wan another up ?

RAINEY. A'm not sure. A har'ly know where A am, yit.

MICHAEL. Man, there's no time t' be lost. Will ye

go til the Or'nge Hall the night, an' spake agin Hart if they agree not til marry wan another ?

RAINEY. How'll A know they'll kape their word ?

MICHAEL. Ye'll have til trust them.

RAINEY. An' if they betray me ?

MICHAEL. Ye'll have til lave them til God. Sure, treachery be anny wan else is no rayson fur treachery be you.

HUGH. Ye needn' bother yerself, we'll not agree til that.

MICHAEL. It's not you A'm goin' til ask. Nora, ye know what this means, don't ye ? Ye know what we're workin' fur ?

NORA. Ay.

MICHAEL. It's a bigger thing nor you are, issen it ? Ye know it is, for all ye won't answer. It's Irelan' agin you. Irelan' 's a bigger thing nor you an' Hugh an' me an' all o' us rowled thegither.

NORA. A don't belave it. A'm in the wurl' t' be happy, an' A'll be happy wi' him.

MICHAEL. What'll yer happiness be till ye, if it manes the destruction o' a nation ?

NORA. A don't care.

RAINEY. Have ye no thought fur others ?

NORA. No, A haven't. On'y fur him an' me.

HUGH. Ye've no thought yerself fur anythin' but yer blin' superstitions an' yer bigotry. You're a man til talk about sacrifice, whin ye'd destroy Irelan' fur yer damned bigotry.

MICHAEL. Don't be talkin' like that. Sure, it's his faith. He can't go back on his faith.

HUGH. A can't go back on Nora.

MICHAEL. Will ye give him up, Nora. It's no good talkin' t' him. He's demented wi' love.

NORA. No, A won't give him up. A need him, A need him.

MICHAEL. What's your need til the wurl's need ?

MRS. RAINEY. Man, Michael, when yer as ould as A am,

ye'll know that yer own need is the wurl's need. It's love that Nora an' Hugh needs, an' it's love the wurl' needs. Ye're wrong til be suggestin' partin' til them. Can't ye see, they're doin' the very thing ye want Irelan' t' do. It's Cathlik an' Prodesan joinin' han's thegither. It's quare ye shud be wantin' til separate them.

MICHAEL. It's acause a want a bigger joinin' o' han's. It's not enough fur a man an' a wumman til join han's. A want til see the whole wurl' at peace.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye'll on'y git that be men an' weemen bein' at peace. Him an' her, Mickie, are bigger than the wurl', if ye on'y knew it. That man o' mine can't see fardher nor churches an' Or'nge Lodges, an' all the time there's men an' weemen stan'in' about, waitin' fur somethin' til bring them thegither.

MICHAEL. Aw, but selfishness is the curse o' the wurl'. An' it's the curse o' Irelan' more nor anny other country. They wur alwis thinkin' o' theirselves, the men an' weemen that might ha' saved Irelan'. Whinivir a man's come near deliverin' Irelan', a wumman's stepped in an' destroyed him. It's alwis bin the way since the beginnin'. Alwis, alwis, alwis! There'll be no salvation fur Irelan' til a man is born that dussen care a God's curse fur weemen. They're hangin' about the neck o' the lan', draggin' her down.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye're blamin' us fur the follies o' men. Is Nora to blame acause my man's a fool?

RAINEY. A'm no fool. A must stick til the right. It's onnacherl fur a man an' a wumman til live in the same house an' worship in a differ'nt church.

MRS. RAINEY. Sure, if they can live in the same lan' they can live in the same house. It's on'y igner'nice an' wickedness an' men wi' foul tongues that makes it hard. John, ye'll be a good man, an' go til the Or'nge Hall the night, an' do yer best t' keep the peace.

RAINEY. A can't go.

HUGH. A'll go meself. A won't belave that the men o' Irelan' will let bigotry destroy them fur ivir.

MICHAEL. Ye can't go. Ye're not an Or'ngeman.

HUGH. A'll git in somehow. If A've spoiled the work, A can mend it again.

MICHAEL. If ye had on'y waited awhile. In a week or two, it 'ud ha' bin all over, an' we'd ha' won. Aw, Mr. Rainey, can't ye think o' the danger o' losin' iv'rythin' be yer action. Ye run the risk o' perpetuatin' bigotry an' losin' all we've struck fur. Man, ye can't do the like o' that.

RAINEY. A'll do what ye want if he'll give her up. A wun't go anear the Or'nge Hall if he dussen.

HUGH. An' A wun't give her up A tell ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, the wurl' is bein' destroyed be headstrong men. (*To RAINEY*). Will ye go til the Lodge the night, an' lave this over fur awhile. (*To HUGH*). Ye'll promise not til marry her til after yer da's had time til think it over?

HUGH. Ay, A'll do that.

RAINEY. There's nathin' til be thought over. He's determined til marry her, an' she's determined not til change her religion. There's nathin' more til be said. Ye'll git me t' go t' the Lodge the night ondher pretence that mebbe they'll change their min's, an' ye know as well as yer livin', they won't. (*Pointing to NORA*.) Luk at that wumman's face. She manes til marry him.

MICHAEL. Wud ye sacrifice all the rest o' us fur them? That's what ye're doin' mind ye. There's a whole townfull o' us, an' ye'll let us go t' wreck an' ruin fur wan man an' a wumman.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, indeed, ye're just as bad as they are.

RAINEY. Ay, ye'll all make me out in the wrong. Ye give me no credit a-tall. A'm on'y an obstinit ould man t' ye. Ye nivir think A'm in earnest about me religion.

TOM. A nivir knew bein' in earnest wus anny excuse fur makin' a fool o' yerself.

RAINEY. Hould yer tongue.

TOM. Naw, A wun't. A've bin putt upon long enough. Ye're an ould fool, that's what ye are; a damned ould fool.

Mixed Marriage

RAINEY. Ye young scoundrel . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Tom, dear, don't ye think ye might go out fur a wee walk ?

TOM. Naw, A don't want a wee walk. A'm alwis sent out fur a walk whin there's a bit o' bother. A'm a man the same as he is.

MICHAEL. Aw, Tom, don't make it anny worse noi it is.

MRS. RAINEY. Now, just sit down, the whole o' ye. Dear-a-dear, it's the quare hard work fur a wumman, keepin' men at peace. If there wussen the like o' us in the wurl' ye'd be kickin' wan another iv'ry five minits. Now, what are ye goin' t' do about it all ? Are ye goin' t' the Lodge, John ?

RAINEY. Naw, A'm not.

MRS. RAINEY. Is that ye're last answer ?

RAINEY. Ay, it is.

MRS. RAINEY. It's a quare pity o' ye. Ye'll be sorry fur this, A tell ye.

RAINEY. A can't help that.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, Mickie, an' what are you goin' t' do ?

MICHAEL. A don't know. A'll have til think o' some-thin'. A'm all throughover. What wi' the slap on the head an' this suddent trouble, A don't know what A'm doin'. A'm near broke wi' grief. A'm the one feels it most. A've dreamt o' this since A wus born, an' now it's near done, this comes an' destroys it. My God, Mrs. Rainey, what a wurl'.

MRS. RAINEY (*patting him on the back*). Aw, keep yer heart up, Mickie. Mebbe, it'll be all right. A wish there wus Or'ngeweemen. A'd go meself in his place.

HUGH (*jumping up*). A'm not an Or'ngeman, but A'll go. Hart issen nayther, an' if they'll let him in, they'll let me. A'll spake til them, an' putt a stop til Hart's nonsense. A'm the one'll do it. A'll not let it be said the peace o' Irelan' wus destroyed be the Rainey's.

RAINEY. Ay, ye'll do a quare lot. Ye can't spake ?

HUGH. A can spake as good as you.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, can't ye control yer tongues. Ye do too much spakin' atween ye. Ye're consated about yer spakin'.

HUGH. A've nivir spoke afore, but A'll spake the night. A will, A declare til God. A'll put a stap til bigotry.

RAINEY. Will ye tell them why A've refused til have annythin' more til do wi' it?

MRS. RAINEY. What wud he be doin' that fur?

RAINEY. Naw, iv coorse not. Ye'll desave them as ye desaved me. D'ye think anny good'll come out o' that?

HUGH. It's noan o' their business who A marry.

NORA. A can't ondherstan' why a man an' a wumman can't git married wi'out iv'ry wan goin' out o' their wits?

MRS. RAINEY. Och, they alwis do, dear. Sure, it's the way the wurl's made. Ye have t' putt up wi' it.

TOM. It's a funny soart o' wurl' then.

HUGH. A don't belave the Or'ngemen are such fools as ye make out. They're brave sensible men, a lot o' them, if they wur on'y let alone be them that's supposed t' be their betters.

RAINEY. Will ye tell them why.

HUGH. It's not necessary. It's nathin' t' do wi' it.

RAINEY. Then A'll go meself an' tell them. We'll see who can spake the best then?

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, ye cudden go out on a night like this. Sure, ye're gettin' ould.

RAINEY. Lave me alone, will ye. Ye're all conspirin' agin me, but A'll bate ye yit. Gimme me coat, an' let me git out o' this.

MICHAEL. Ye'll have blood on yer han's, Mr. Raine, if ye do that.

RAINEY. A don't care, A tell ye. A'll putt a stap t' this.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, give him his coat, an' let him go, the headstrong ould man.

HUGH. A'll be left whin he comes back.

TOM. Ay, an' so will I.

RAINEY (to MRS. RAINEY). A suppose you'll be gone too?

Mixed Marriage

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, A think A'll be here. God help ye, ye'll need someone t' luk after ye.

RAINEY. Nathin'll stap me. A've made up me min'. Good-night t' ye. (*To NORA*). Mebbe ye're satisfied, now, me fine girl?

MRS. RAINEY. Lave her alone. Aren't ye content wi' the bad work ye've done wi'out proddin' her wi' a knife? G'long wi' ye, an' do yer dirty work, an' don't stan' there hurtin' a girl that nivir done you no harm.

RAINEY. She tuk me son thrum me.

MRS. RAINEY. G'long wi' ye, an' make yer spache.

RAINEY stands for a moment irresolute, then goes out of the house quickly.

(*MICHAEL covers his face with his hands. There is a silence, except for the sobbing of NORA.*)

TOM. A think A'll go out for a walk.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, do dear.

Exit TOM.

MICHAEL. A'll go home.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye'll not let this upset ye, Mickie? Ye'll just go on tryin', wun't ye?

MICHAEL. It's the sore work, Mrs. Rainey.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, but sure, it 'ud be far sorer not til do it.

HUGH. A'm quare an' sorry, Mickie.

MICHAEL. It's a pity, Hughie. It's a quare pity.

HUGH. We'll not let this bate us.

NORA. No, we wun't. It's us now, that'll have til do the work. We'll all do it. A'll go an' talk til the men in the street, an' mebbe they'll listen til me. A'd 'a' given the wurl' if this hadden happened.

MICHAEL. It's the quare hard job til stap bigotry wance it's started. It runs like lightnin' an' them that tries til stap it has weights hangin' on them til keep them back. A'm afeard it's no good.

MRS. RAINEY. It'll be no good, if ye're afeard. Ye must keep yer heart up, that's the way o' the wurl'.

NORA. Ay, that's true. Good-night t' ye, Mrs. Rainey.

MRS. RAINEY (*pulling the girl close to her and kissing her very tenderly*). Ye'll be a good wife til him, dear, wun't ye?

NORA. A will, indeed.

MRS. RAINEY. Good-night, dear. Good-night, Hughie. When ye want me, just run in.

HUGH. A'll come back whin A've got lodgin's fur me things.

MRS. RAINEY. A'll have them ready fur ye. Aw, dear, A wish ye wurn't goin'. (*HUGH puts his arms about her and hugs her tightly*). God bless ye, dear.

MICHAEL. Whativir happens, Mrs. Rainey, A'm not sorry A knew you.

MRS. RAINEY. Ah, well now, that's somethin' til be livin' fur. Sure, the best o' us can't do no more nor that.

MICHAEL. Good-night t' ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Come in in the mornin' an' A'll dress yer head fur ye.

MICHAEL. Aw, ye're brave an' kind. A cudden trouble ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Sure, it's no trouble a-tall. Good-night, Michael. Good-night, t' ye all.

HUGH. Good-night, ma.

Exeunt HUGH, NORA, and MICHAEL.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, dear, it's a troublesome wurl'.

(She draws her chair up to the fire and resumes her darning.)

ACT IV

It is ten days later. The kitchen shows signs of unusual agitation on the part of the occupants. The window-shutters are closely barred, and the street door is well fastened. Outside is heard the noise of people shouting; occasionally a stone strikes the shutters or the door. MRS. RAINEY and NORA are sitting by the fire. JOHN RAINEY strides up and down the kitchen floor, without speaking. Now and then he stops and listens to the noise. A stone rattles on the window, and a loud voice is heard shouting, "Bring out the Fenians."

MRS. RAINEY. Ye wud think they wur wil' savages thrum the heart o' Africa, the way they're goin' on.

NORA. Sure, they're just demented with rage, an' they don't know what they're doin'.

(Another stone strikes against the shutters.)

A wondher how many stones they've clodded at the house the day?

MRS. RAINEY. Are them two upstairs all right?

NORA. A'll call up til them. *(She rises and passes in front of RAINEY; he ignores her. She calls up the stairs.)*

Hughie, are ye all right?

HUGH *(calling from above)*. Aye, we're all right.

NORA. Ye'd better not be showin' yerself fur fear they clod a stone at ye.

(The noise of breaking glass is heard. NORA runs up the stairs, crying out.)

MRS. RAINEY *(going to the staircase)*. Come on down. the whole o' ye.

HUGH. Sure, we're all right. It's on'y the winda they've broke. The peelers are comin' now.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, thank God. Mebbe, they'll go away now? (*She returns to her seat.*)

RAINEY. It's like the Day o' Judgment.

MRS. RAINEY. A'm quare an' sorry fur ye, John. It's not very pleasant til have the like o' this on yer mind.

RAINEY. A'm not ashamed o' anything A've done. A'd do it again. But it's tarrible all the same.

MRS. RAINEY. Yer conscience an' yer principles causes a great dale o' trouble til other people.

RAINEY. A don't repent, A tell ye. Ye think ye'll prove me in the wrong acause o' the riot, but A don't care if there wus fifty riots wan on the top o' the other, A'm right, an' A'd do it again.

MRS. RAINEY. It's quare t' think o' ye goin' down that night, an' stirrin' up strife. It wus a tarrible thing t' do, John. Ye made the quare lot o' bad blood that time. An' a lot o' it'll be spilt afore this is over. (*A volley of stones rattles on the shutters.*) Fur dear sake, d'ye hear that. Ye'd think they had a grudge agin the windas, the way they're batterin' them.

(*TOM comes down the stairs, hurriedly.*)

TOM. The peelers are goin' til charge them wi' their batons.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, God help us. There'll be broken heads in a minit or two.

(*Wilder cries are heard outside.*)

TOM. The end of it'll be we'll have t' flit out o' this town. No wan'll ivir spake til us again. A met Geordie M'Cracken a day ago, an' he nivir as much as lukked at me. It was the quare cut.

MRS. RAINEY. Mebbe, he didden see ye!

TOM. Aw, he saw me all right. He passed me by as if he didden know me. Me an' him was chums thegither. . . . It's brave an' hard on me that nivir done nathin' til be losin' me frien's, acause me da won't have a Cathlik in the family. (*To his father.*) Mebbe, ye're sorry now fur what ye've done?

RAINEY. A'm not sorry fur nathin'.

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TOM. Well, ye ought t' be then.

MRS. RAINEY. All right, Tom, ye needin go on talkin' about it. Sure, there's things ye feel inside ye aven when ye won't let on til anny one else. Ye nivir know what's in a man's heart.

TOM. A'll go til Glasgow after this is over, or mebbe til Englan'. They don't make a lot o' damned fools o' themselves about religion over there.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, but mebbe, they have their own way o' bein' foolish! Ye nivir know.

(The noise outside has grown wilder.)

TOM *(going up the stairs again)*. There'll be some'll be sorry afore this day is done.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, ay, indeed there will.

(Exit TOM.)

RAINEY. He's right, that lad; we'll have t' lave the town when it's over.

MRS. RAINEY. It's hard t' be lavin' the place ye wur born an' bred in when ye're ould.

RAINEY. Ay.

MRS. RAINEY. But A suppose ye're right?

RAINEY. A am.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, ye alwis thought that. *(They do not speak to one another for a moment.)* Why don't ye make it up wi' Hughie an' Nora. Ye know they come here specially this mornin' til be frien's wi' ye. It issen their fault the riot broke out the day. Ye've not said a word til aythir o' them since they come in, though they're ready an' willin' til make it up.

RAINEY. They're not here be my will.

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, that's true. But, sure, it's no good houl'in' out agin what can't be helped. Ye might as well putt a kind face on ye as not. They'll be married in a wee while, an' A wudden like us to be bad frien's wi' them when they'll mebbe need us most. We're gettin' ould, John. It dussen become the ould t' be headstrong an' onforgivin'

RAINEY. A haven't another word t' say about it. A've said all A've got t' say. A can say no more.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye can alwis putt in another word if ye want t', an' make it all differnt.

RAINEY. A don't want to.

MRS. RAINEY. God forgive ye fur a headstrong man, John.

RAINEY. That's atween Him an' me.

(HUGH comes down the stairs.

HUGH. It's sickenin' t' be watchin' them. The peelers is batin' them over the heads wi' their batons. A wish t' God it wus over.

MRS. RAINEY. Are they stappin', d'ye think?

HUGH. Naw, they're not near stappin'. The peelers aren't enough.

(NORA comes down quickly.

NORA. Aw, Hugh, there's a Cathlik crowd comin' down the street, an' the peelers is atween them. There'll be murder in a minit.

(TOM cries out from the room above, "Hi, Hughie, come up quick.")

HUGH. What is it?

TOM (appearing at the head of the stairs). There's a lot o' Cathliks come, an' Mickie's at the head o' them.

RAINEY. Aw, A tould ye, didden A?

TOM. He's tryin' t' git them t' go away, but they're not takin' no notis o' him. A saw wan o' them hittin' him wi' a stick, an' shovin' him out o' the way.

MRS. RAINEY. It's no place that fur a man that manes well.

(HUGH runs up the stair quickly, followed by NORA.

MRS. RAINEY waits a little while, and then goes after them.

(RAINEY is left alone in the kitchen. He sits down in front of the fire and stares steadily into it. The noise of the riot is now intense. After a little while, TOM comes to the head of the stairs and shouts to his father

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TOM. The sodgers are comin'. The peelers can't houl' out agin the crowd.

(RAINEY does not reply. TOM goes back again. Above the murmur of the voices outside, the voice of MICHAEL is heard.)

MICHAEL. Fur God's sake, boys, go home, or there'll be bloodshed.

(There are loud shouts of "Fenian" and "To hell with the Pope," and the noise of stones being thrown.)

(MRS. RAINEY and NORA come back to the kitchen.)

MRS. RAINEY. He'll be killed if he stan's there anny longer. A've a good min' t' open the dure an' let him in.

RAINEY. Ye'll not let no more Cathliks in here.

MRS. RAINEY. What harm wud that do ye?

RAINEY. There's enough o' them here.

NORA. Ye'd better not open the dure. The crowd 'ud git in, an' dear on'y knows what they'd do.

(The noise of tramping soldiers is heard, and an agitated voice reads monotonously outside the window.)

NORA. What's that man doin'?

TOM (from stairs). There's a magistrate outside readin' the Riot Act.

NORA. The Riot Act!

TOM. Ay, there'll be shootin' after that.

(An officer's voice is heard giving commands.)

MRS. RAINEY. They'll on'y use blank kertridges t' frighten them. Mebbe they'll go home now?

(The Magistrate is heard calling upon the crowd to disperse. There is a roar of voices in reply. The Magistrate's voice is heard in a lull, shouting, "The soldiers will shoot if you don't go home quietly." There is a rattle of stones on the street, and much shouting. Then the officer is heard giving orders, and the noise of rifles being fired follows.)

NORA. Aw, Holy Mother o' God, they're shootin'!

MRS. RAINEY. Dear, oh, dear, oh dear!

HUGH (from the top of the stairs). It's all right, ma, they

just shot over their heads. There's no wan hurt. It's scared them a bit, an' some o' them is runnin' home.

MRS. RAINEY. Come on, down, Hugh, and bring Tom wi' ye. It's mebbe not safe up there.

HUGH. Aw, it's safe enough.

(The uproar continues.)

NORA (*who is slightly hysterical*). No, don't go back again, Hugh. A'm afeard til death.

HUGH (*coming down the stairs and putting his arm round her*). Sure, there's nathin' til be afeard o'. It'll be all over in a minit or two.

(More stones are thrown.)

TOM. (*from above*) They've knocked a soldier senseless wi' a brick.

NORA. Aw, I know it'll be death til some. Don't go away thrum me. Me heart's in me mouth wi' fear.

HUGH. There now, ye're all right.

NORA. A've not bin the same since the men bate ye at the Custom House steps that day . . . A lost me nerve when A saw them strikin' ye.

(RAINEY, who still paces up and down the room, passes her, and she starts with terror.)

HUGH. What ails ye ?

NORA. It's nathin'. It wus like a shadow . . . (*She sits down on the sofa, and pulls him down beside her*). A'll be all right in a minit. On'y don't go away thrum me. A want ye near me. Aw, Hughie, Hughie, it wus our fault. We shud 'a' done what yer da wanted us t'do. We'll nivir know no peace after this day's work, but misery til we die. A'd give the wurl' if on'y A cud ondo it all.

HUGH. Ye mussen take on like that. Sure, it can't be helped.

RAINEY. It cud 'a' bin helped.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye wur all s' headstrong.

NORA. A wish A cud putt things back again. Is there nathin' we can do ?

RAINEY. There's nathin' til be done. It's too late.

NORA. There'll be men killed, an' weemen weepin'.

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It wus our fault. It's us they shud be shootin' an' not them.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, dear, hould yer tongue. Ye mussen say the like o' that. (*She puts her arms round NORA*). Sure, don't be cryin' like that. It's not your fault the wurl's like it is.

NORA. A can't help thinkin' it's me's t' blame. Ye min' what Michael said about men bein' ruined be weemen . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, sure, men alwis putts the blame on us whativir happens.

NORA. If A cud stap it A wud do annything at all. Mebbe, if A wus til go out til them, an' tell them it was my fault, they'd go home! . . .

HUGH. Och, Nora, dear, don't be talkin' wil'ly. Ye're not near yerself.

(The uproar continues, and, after the word of command is given, the rifles are fired again.)

NORA. Aw, they're shootin' again. Don't let them, don't let them.

TOM. (*from the top of the stairs*) It's all right. They've not hit annyone. They're on'y tryin' t' frighten them. It's blank kertridges they're usin'. A wish t' me goodness, Mickie 'ud go on home. They're throwin' stones at him as well as the soldiers.

MRS. RAINEY. Try and sign til him to go away.

TOM. A'll try, but sure he'll not see me, and not heed me if he does. (*He goes back into the room.*)

HUGH. A wush we cud get him in here.

MRS. RAINEY. Yer da says he'll not let him in.

HUGH. Da, ye'll not keep it up anny longer, will ye?

RAINEY. A don't know ye. Ye're a stranger in this house. You an' that wumman. (*He points to NORA.*)

HUGH. A day like this, da, is no time fur ill-feelin'.

RAINEY. There can be nathin' else on a day when men clod stones at my dure. D'ye hear that? Clod stones at my dure. There nivir wus the like o' that done til me afore

HUGH. Well, it can't be helped now.

RAINEY. Ye can't get out o' yer punishment that way. Yer reward's outside: men mad wi' rage, an' sodgers shootin' them down.

HUGH (*with rising anger*). An' whose fault is that? There wudda bin noan o' this if ye hadden bin so head-strong and bigoted.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, don't begin it all over again.

NORA. Yer da's right, Hugh. It's me's t' blame. Ye wud 'a' given me up if A'd 'a' let ye. A'll nivir be happy again wi' this on me min'.

HUGH. Ye'll be all right, dear. Sure, we'll go away . . .

NORA. Ye can't go away thrum yerself. A wish A cud die.

MRS. RAINEY. Fur dear sake, Nora, pull yerself thegither. It's no way t' be goin' on, that. There's a dale t' be thought o', an' ye'll need all yer wits about it.

NORA. If A wus t' die mebbe it wud putt things right?

HUGH. What's the good o' talkin' about dyin'? It'll be time enough t' do that when ye're ould.

RAINEY. If ye'd thought o' this afore ye done what ye did . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, if we'd all thought o' this afore we done what we did . . . Sure, stap talkin'. We're all makin' excuses for wurselves, an' Mickie's outside tryin' t' make pace. Fur shame.

(The uproar still continues and the voice of the officer is heard calling on the people to disperse. He threatens to use ball-cartridges if they do not do so.)

TOM (*coming to the top of the stairs*). Hugh, they're goin' to shoot in earnest now. A heerd the officer sayin' they wud if the crowd wudden go home. Holy smoke! Somebuddy'll be shot dead. Michael's runnin' about wi' blood streamin' down his face, tellin' the men t' go home, an' whinivir he says a word til wan o' them, they strack him in the face. Aw, it's awful the way they're goin' on, it is indeed.

NORA. Aw, Mickie'll be shot. Ye'll not let them shoot

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him, Hugh. He's done nathin'. It wus us, it wus us. They can shoot me if they like.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye'd better bring him in, Hugh. God save us all, will this day nivir end?

RAINEY. It'll end when it's too late.

(HUGH goes to the door and opens it. The uproar is horrible; stones are thrown at him.)

HUGH. Hi, Michael, fur God's sake come on in er that, or ye'll be killed. *(Loud cries of "Come out, ye Fenian ye," and "Down wi' Popery.")* Come on, Michael!

(The officer speaks again, "For Heaven's sake, men, go home, or I'll order the soldiers to fire on you." A wild volley of stones is the reply of the crowd. The officer shouts to his men, "Present arms!")

Aw, God save us, they're goin' t' shoot now. Michael. ye fool, come on in, or they'll kill ye

NORA. What d'ye say? They're not goin' t' shoot in earnest, are they?

HUGH *(coming back to the kitchen, and covering his face with his hands)*. Ay, they are.

NORA *(starts up)*. They mussent shoot the people down.

(The officer speaks again, "For the last time, men, will you go home? I don't want to order the soldiers to shoot." Again, the crowd yells with rage, and throws stones at the soldiers.)

No, no, no, don't shoot them! It wus my fault, A tell ye. Stap, stap. *(She runs into the street)* Stap, stap, it wus me! . . .

(As she rushes into the street, the soldiers fire. She is seen to stagger a little, and look up suddenly, as one does in amazement. She cries, "Aw, Hughie, A'm shot!" and tries to catch the lintel of the door, but falls across the porch. The soldiers are heard charging the mob.)

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, what's happened, what's happened?

HUGH *(running to NORA, and catching her up in his arms)*

Nora, Nora, what's happened ye? My God, they've murdered her.

(MICHAEL *appears in the doorway.*)

MICHAEL. What did ye let her out fur? Tom, Tom, come quick an' help us wi' her.

TOM. A knew somethin' like this wud happen. (*To his father*). Mebbe, ye're satisfied now.

MICHAEL. Run fur a doctor, will ye?

(TOM *goes out of the house quickly. A surly noise continues outside, now rising, now falling.*)

(*A policeman appears in the doorway, and some of the neighbours. HUGH and MICHAEL lift NORA in their arms, and carry her to the sofa. The policeman enters with them, shutting the street door behind him.*)

HUGH. Nora, ye're all right, aren't ye? Aw, spake t' me, wumman.

NORA (*feebly*). Don't be cryin', Hugh. It wus right t' shoot me. It wus my fault. A'm quaren glad.

RAINEY (*as if dreaming*). A wus right. A know A wus rihht.

MRS. RAINEY (*weeping a little, and patting him gently*). Aw, my poor man, my poor man.

THE MAGNANIMOUS LOVER

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

WILLIAM CATHER, *A Shoemaker.*

JANE CATHER, *His Wife.*

MAGGIE CATHER, *His Daughter.*

SAMUEL HINDE, *A Grocer.*

HENRY HINDE, *His Son.*

THE MAGNANIMOUS LOVER

The scene is laid in the kitchen and living-room of William Cather's cottage in the North-Irish village of Donaghbreagh. The room is large, and well-lighted by the two windows, through which the Irish Sea can be seen. The windows are tightly shut, and probably have never once been open since they were inserted in their frames ; but this does not affect the ventilation of the room to any great extent, for the cottage door, which is in two sections, is always open either to its full extent or, as now, half open.

Immediately facing the street door, on the other side of the house, is a door leading to the best bedroom. The wall in which this bedroom door is placed terminates in another door which leads to the scullery and the garden at the back of the house. The space in this wall between the two doors is occupied by a large dresser, piled with crockery of many hues and shapes.

A large, round pot is suspended over the open fire which burns in the wall stretching between the front and the rear of the house, furthest from the street door. Over the mantel-shelf, on which are articles of cheap china, a clock and a tea-caddy, hangs a large oleograph showing King William the Third in the act of crossing the Boyne. On either side of this picture are two oblong mottoes printed in floral letters on a black background, the legends reading : "Thou God Seest Me," and, "What is Home Without A Mother."

Between the two windows is a large, unstained deal table above which hangs another oleograph, revealing the Secret of England's Greatness, and a further motto, "There's No Place like Home."

There are other mottoes scattered over the walls ; some shield-shaped, some oblong, some circular, of smaller size than those already mentioned : all bearing texts from the

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Bible:—“What Shall It Profit a Man if He Gain the Whole World, and Lose His Own Soul.” “Jesus Wept.” “Blessed Are the Humble and Meek.” “God Is Here.”
It is the afternoon of a late summer day.

Samuel Hinde puts his head over the lower half-door, which is barred. There is no one in the kitchen.

SAMUEL HINDE. Are you in, Mrs. Cather.

MRS. CATHER (*speaking from the scullery*). Aye, indeed I am. (*She comes into the kitchen.*) Och, is that yourself, Sam! Sure, come on in.

SAMUEL HINDE (*unbarring the door, and entering*). I've something very important to say to you, Mrs. Cather. Very important.

MRS. CATHER. Have you, Sam?

SAMUEL HINDE. Aye. Where's William?

MRS. CATHER. Aw, he's down the garden. Will I call him.

SAMUEL HINDE. Aye, I wish you would.

MRS. CATHER (*calling at the scullery door*). Hi, William, come on in a minute.

WILLIAM CATHER (*answering from the garden*). What do you want?

MRS. CATHER. Come on in a minute. I want you.

WILLIAM CATHER. All right, I'm coming.

SAMUEL HINDE. Where's Maggie the day?

MRS. CATHER. Aw, she's over to Killisle; but sure she'll be back soon. Were you wanting her?

SAMUEL HINDE. Not just yet a wee while. It'll do later.

Enter William Cather, a lean, kindly man with a leathern apron bound round his loins.

WILLIAM CATHER. What do you want? (*Seeing Samuel Hinde.*) How are you, Sam?

SAMUEL HINDE. Sure, I'm rightly. I want to talk to you a minute. It's about Maggie.

MRS. CATHER. About Maggie?

SAMUEL HINDE. Aye. Henry's come back. By the two o'clock train.

MRS. CATHER. Come back ! (*Her voice hardens.*) Has he come back to make Maggie a respectable woman ?

SAMUEL HINDE. Aye, he has.

MRS. CATHER. Oh, thank God !

WILLIAM CATHER. Sit down, will you, Sam ?

SAMUEL HINDE. I will in a minute, but I'd better call Henry in first. He's just waiting round the corner.

WILLIAM CATHER. Aye, bring him in, will you.

Samuel Hinde goes to the door, and beckons to his son, Henry Hinde, who enters.

SAMUEL HINDE. Here's Henry, Mrs. Cather.

MRS. CATHER. How are you, Henry ?

HENRY HINDE. I'm bravely, thank you. How is yourself ?

MRS. CATHER. I'm brave and well, thank you. Sit down, will you.

WILLIAM CATHER. I'm glad to see you again, Henry.

HENRY HINDE. Thank you, Mr. Cather.

WILLIAM CATHER. Your father was saying something about you and Maggie, Henry !

SAMUEL HINDE. Aye, I was saying !

WILLIAM CATHER. Maybe, it would be better if Henry was to speak for himself, Sam.

SAMUEL HINDE. Aye, maybe it would.

HENRY HINDE. Mr. Cather, I did you a great wrong ten years ago.

WILLIAM CATHER. You did, Henry.

HENRY HINDE. And sorry I am for it.

WILLIAM CATHER. You could have been sorry sooner with advantage.

HENRY HINDE. I was headstrong and wayward, Mr. Cather. I was in the devil's grip ; but a change has come over me. The old life has dropped away from me, and I've been washed in the Blood of the Lamb.

MRS. CATHER. Are you saved, Henry ?

HENRY HINDE. Yes, thank God, I've been saved, Mrs. Cather. I was a wilful, hell-deserving sinner when I lived here. I wanted my own way in everything, and I

didn't care about nobody else. The devil was in me. When I went to Liverpool, after the child was born, I led a wayward life ; but God was watching over me, and He saved me at last. I've got on, too, beyond my deserts. The Almighty's been very gracious to me. I've got a great deal to be thankful for.

WILLIAM CATHER. I'm glad to hear it, Henry. Maggie !

HENRY HINDE. It's about Maggie I've come back. Yesterday morning as I was contemplating God's goodness to me, I was wondering what I could do to show my gratitude to Him. I owe Him a great debt, and I want to pay Him back something. And I heard a voice within me, saying, Henry Hinde, you once did a woman a wrong. You left her with a bastard child !

MRS. CATHER. Aw, don't say the word, Henry !

HENRY HINDE. Isn't it true, Mrs. Cather ? Didn't I leave Maggie with a child that I was the father of ? I was headstrong in my sin, and I wouldn't marry her. My sin was deep, Mrs. Cather, and you can't make little of it. And when I heard the voice of God telling me to go back to the woman I had ruined and make her respectable, I just took the next boat from Liverpool, and I got to Belfast this morning, and I came here without a word of warning to anyone.

SAMUEL HINDE. Aye, you could have knocked me down with a feather when I saw him standing in the door. Sure, I thought it was a ghost.

HENRY HINDE. I felt it to be my duty to come back. Mind, it's not because I couldn't get anyone else. It's because it's the will of God. Not my will, O Lord, but Thine be done. I could marry a minister's daughter if I wanted to.

SAMUEL HINDE. Aye, a minister's daughter, mind you. Over in Liverpool. An Englishwoman.

HENRY HINDE. But I put all desires away from me, and came back to do the will of God.

MRS. CATHER (*weeping softly*). I thank God for this day.

WILLIAM CATHER (*sullenly*). We've waited ten years for the voice of God to speak. Ten years is a long time, Henry.

HENRY HINDE. What is ten years to eternity?

SAMUEL HINDE. Aye, indeed, what is it?

HENRY HINDE. If I had not come back at the bidding of God, He might have damned my soul for ever. How was I to know that He wasn't testing me as with fire.

SAMUEL HINDE. Aw, that's true—that's true! Lord bless me, it would be a terrible thing to go to hell.

HENRY HINDE. Is the child all right?

WILLIAM CATHER. Aye. He's running about the street somewhere.

SAMUEL HINDE. I was thinking myself the other day, he was a wee bit wild. Running about the street too much maybe. It's not good for a child to be running about the street much.

MRS. CATHER. Indeed, Sam Hinde, he's not running wild about the street. There's no child in Donaghreagh that's better looked after nor he is, for all he is—for all his mother's not married.

HENRY HINDE. I feel it's my duty to bring that child up in the fear of God. He came from the devil, and he must be given to God. Does Maggie go to church regular?

MRS. CATHER. Not since her trouble, Henry.

HENRY HINDE. She has a soul to be saved, Mrs. Cather, and by the help of God I mean to save it. Aw, I'm glad I listened to His voice. I feel I shall be the instrument for much good in His hands.

WILLIAM CATHER. Do you mean to marry her?

HENRY HINDE. I do. It's the will of God that I should.

SAMUEL HINDE. You know, he could marry a minister's daughter if he liked. Over in Liverpool there. And mind you, they're queer and particular in England.

WILLIAM CATHER. I daresay you're right, Sam, but that's not the question. The question is, what will Maggie say. You see Henry talks about his duty to

God; but he doesn't say anything about his duty to Maggie. And after all, it was her that was wronged, not God. Not that I would make little of our duty to God. There's no man knows more about that duty nor I do. But we're men, Sam, you and Henry and me. Maggie's a woman, and women don't think so much of their duty to God as men do. It would be a bit awkward for some of us, if they did. You don't love Maggie, Henry?

SAMUEL HINDE. Och, man alive, didn't I tell you about the minister's daughter over in Liverpool? It's her he loves.

WILLIAM CATHER. Do you love her, Henry?

HENRY HINDE. As a fallen sister!

WILLIAM CATHER. Do you love her as a man should love the woman he wants to marry?

HENRY HINDE. I'll do my duty by her. It's a debt I owe to God. I'll be a good husband to her, and I'll try to bring her to the paths of peace. Will she be long before she comes back?

MRS. CATHER. I don't know. She said she wouldn't be long. Maybe, she'll be back soon.

WILLIAM CATHER. I wonder if she'll have you, Henry. Women think more of loving a man nor they do of loving God. But you never know. I wish she was here.

HENRY HINDE. I hope she won't be long, for I must get back to Belfast to catch the boat for Liverpool the night. I can't leave the shop more nor a day.

SAMUEL HINDE. He's doing queer and well in the shop. Aren't you, Henry?

HENRY HINDE. Aye, the Lord has prospered me. I have two assistants and a vanman. The minister thinks a terrible lot of me. He took a fancy to me the minute he saw me in the chapel.

MRS. CATHER. Chapel! You've not turned a Catholic, are you?

HENRY HINDE. No, Mrs. Cather, I'm a Protestant, thank God. They call churches chapels in England unless they're Episcopalian places of worship. They call

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us Dissenters and Nonconformists, and they think far more of Catholics than they do of us.

MRS. CATHER. Heth, it must be the queer funny place.

HENRY HINDE. But Catholics have souls to be saved, the same as Protestants. We should never make little of them that has not been born so enlightened as ourselves.

MRS. CATHER. Aw, indeed, many's the time I've said that. Sure, there's good and bad alike in all religions.

HENRY HINDE. There's no bad in my religion, Mrs. Cather. There's no room for bad where God is.

MRS. CATHER. Aw, well, maybe you're right.

HENRY HINDE. I am.

MRS. CATHER. But sure, it's not worth fighting about. Maybe, we're all wrong. You never know.

WILLIAM CATHER. I wish Maggie was here till we tell her.

MRS. CATHER. I hope she'll have you all right, Henry.

SAMUEL HINDE. Have him! Of course, she'll have him! She's not daft, is she?

HENRY HINDE. She's not in a position to choose, Mrs. Cather. A woman that's had a bastard!

MRS. CATHER. Aw, don't say it, Henry!

WILLIAM CATHER. You were it's father anyway. If there's no choosing for her, there's no choosing for you.

HENRY HINDE. There's no choosing for either of us. It's the will of God.

SAMUEL HINDE. But all the same she gets the best of it. Look at him—look at the way he's dressed. Like any gentleman! And him got a shop, and two assistants, and a vanman, and could marry a minister's daughter if he liked. I don't think there's much doubt about who's being favoured by the Almighty.

WILLIAM CATHER. Maybe, Sam, maybe. (*He goes to the door and looks out anxiously.*)

MRS. CATHER. Will you be married soon, Henry?

HENRY HINDE. As soon as possible. I'll tell Mr. Macmillan the night before I go, and I'll come over again in a month's time, and marry her.

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WILLIAM CATHER. Here's Maggie now.

HENRY HINDE. I'm glad to hear it.

Maggie Cather enters, wearing a plaid shawl over her head. She enters hurriedly, throwing the shawl aside as she does so. She does not see Henry Hinde at first.

MAGGIE CATHER (*to Samuel Hinde*). Is that you, Mr. Hinde? (*She sees Henry*). Henry! (*There is a short, painful pause, but she recovers herself.*) I hope you're well.

HENRY HINDE. I'm well enough, thank you.

MRS. CATHER. What kept you, Maggie. You're queer and long-getting back.

MAGGIE CATHER. I was kept longer nor I thought. I hurried home as quick as I could. (*To Henry.*) I suppose you're over for your holidays.

WILLIAM CATHER. Maggie, dear, Henry's come back.

MAGGIE CATHER. So I see, father.

WILLIAM CATHER. He's come back to make you an offer.

MAGGIE CATHER. A what?

WILLIAM CATHER. He wants to marry you.

She looks from one to the other like one who does not quite understand what is being said. Then she turns away, laughing.

MRS. CATHER. What are you laughing for anyway? Sure, it's in earnest he is.

MAGGIE CATHER. Henry, is it true you've come back to marry me?

HENRY HINDE. Aye, it is. And now you know, I'll just go and tell the minister to arrange for the wedding I've got to catch the boat back to Liverpool the night, and I haven't much time to lose.

MAGGIE CATHER. It's ten years since you went away, Henry.

HENRY HINDE. It is.

MAGGIE CATHER. And now you've come back to marry me.

HENRY HINDE. Aye. I'll be back in a month's time for the wedding.

MAGGIE CATHER (*pointing, with sudden fury, to her mother*). Henry Hinde, do you see that old woman?

HENRY HINDE. Aye, I do.

MAGGIE CATHER. Do you remember nothing about her? Do you not mind her and me meeting you one night in the Cregagh Loaning before the child was born?

HENRY HINDE. Aye, I think I do.

MAGGIE CATHER. Do you mind her begging you to marry me?

HENRY HINDE. Aye.

MAGGIE CATHER (*the fury still in her voice*). Do you mind her going down on her knees to you, and begging you for the love of God to marry me? Do you mind me pleading with you, too?

HENRY HINDE. Aye, I do, but what does that matter?

MAGGIE CATHER. Do you mind what you said to us, Henry?

HENRY HINDE. No, I forget.

MAGGIE CATHER. You said I was a bad woman, and you weren't going to marry a whore!

MRS. CATHER (*whimpering*) Maggie, for God's sake don't bring it all up again.

HENRY HINDE. Aye, I do mind that.

MAGGIE CATHER. If I was one then, Henry, I'm one now. I'm just as you left me.

HENRY HINDE. I'm not asking what you are. I know what you are, and I know what I am too. I know what we all are before God—hell-deserving sinners. I've not come back for what you are. I've come back to marry you because it's the will of God.

MAGGIE CATHER. Well, it's not my will, then.

SAMUEL HINDE. Not your will. Woman, you musn't set yourself up against God.

MAGGIE CATHER. I'm not setting myself up against God. I'm setting myself up against Henry.

MRS. CATHER. Maggie, dear, hold your tongue, and talk sense. Sure, it's all for the best.

WILLIAM CATHER. Leave her alone.

MAGGIE CATHER. Me and my mother did to you, Henry, what no woman should ever do to any man—we went down on our knees to you. Do you hear that? I pleaded with you to save me from shame, and you wouldn't. You ran away, and left me to face it myself. It wasn't easy to face either. My God, when I think of it! I couldn't go to the Sabbath-school nor the meeting. Everybody knew I was going to have a child, and I wasn't married. I used to pretend there was nothing the matter with me. . . . Once the minister preached an awful sermon about the woman taken in sin. Aw, I felt that every eye in the place was on me. There was no pity, no mercy.

HENRY HINDE. Think of the mercy of God, Maggie.

MAGGIE CATHER. I couldn't see it. I could only see the disgrace and the shame.

MRS. CATHER. Aw, but don't think of it, Maggie. Sure, it's all over, now. Henry'll marry you, and you'll be all right again.

MAGGIE CATHER. I won't, I tell you, I won't. I'm not going to marry him.

SAMUEL HINDE. Maggie Cather, you must be out of your mind. Do you know he's got a shop, and two assistants, and a vanman?

MAGGIE CATHER. I don't care if he's got fifty shops, and fifty thousand vanmen, I won't marry him.

WILLIAM CATHER (*soothingly*). Maggie!

SAMUEL HINDE. Aye, and he could marry a minister's daughter if he liked.

HENRY HINDE. Aw, hold your wheesht, father. Maggie, there's no one knows better nor I do what I've done. You've good reason to be angry and bitter, but I've not come back to make excuses. I'm a guilty sinner the same as you are, but I've been saved. Thank God for that! I've had a call from the Father, and I must answer the call at my soul's peril.

MAGGIE CATHER. You've not come back because you love me, then?

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HENRY HINDE. The lusts of the flesh!

MAGGIE CATHER. Aw, stop, stop, man, stop. I want none of your religion.

MRS. CATHER. Maggie, dear!

WILLIAM CATHER. Leave her alone.

SAMUEL HINDE. I must say I don't think your manners is very genteel, Maggie Cather.

MAGGIE CATHER. Listen, Henry Hinde. All the time you were away in Liverpool where nobody knew you, I was here where everybody knew me. Do you know what that means? People staring at me, and turning up their noses at me? There was nothing but contempt for me at first. I was a bad woman, and I wasn't asked nowhere. Fellows in the street treated me like dirt beneath their feet. They spoke to me as if I was a bad woman. And all the time you were in Liverpool, and were thought a lot of. It wasn't fair. And it wasn't me only. I mind once I was coming down an entry, and I saw a lot of children tormenting the child. He was standing in the middle of them, and they were making him say things after them. I heard them saying, "What are you, Willie?" And then they made him say, "I'm a wee bastard!" Aw, if I could have laid hands on you then, Henry, I would have throttled you.

MRS. CATHER. But sure it's all over now.

MAGGIE CATHER. Aye, they don't treat me with contempt now. I've lived that down. They just pity me now. Sometimes when I go past their doors, an old woman'll hear me passing, and ask who it is, and they always say, "It's only poor Maggie Cather." I could thole their contempt better nor their pity, but I didn't run away from either of them. I faced it all, and I've brought up the child as good as any of them. And now when I've bore the hardest of it, you come back to marry me. Maybe, you'll be ordering me about, and bossing the child. I'm to do what you tell me. I've to love, honour and obey you. What for, Henry, that's what I'd like to know.

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HENRY HINDE. I've come back at the command of God.

WILLIAM CATHER. Maggie, dear, maybe you don't understand it all. You'd better think it over a bit.

MAGGIE CATHER. I understand perfectly, father.

WILLIAM CATHER. Aye, but wait a bit, Maggie. There's more in it nor you think. The lad's getting big, you know, and the time'll soon be here when you'll lose your hold on him. You know, Maggie, every woman loses her grip on her man or her child some time or other, and it just depends on wee things whether they ever get it back again. The child needs a man to look after him.

MAGGIE CATHER. Aren't you good enough for him?

WILLIAM CATHER. I'm too old. Old men are worse nor old women for controlling young people. You are never controlled so well as you are by someone near your own age. He'll be leaving school in a year or two, and neither you nor me'll be any younger then. You want a man to look after him.

MRS. CATHER. Aye, dear, indeed you do.

MAGGIE CATHER. I can look after him myself.

WILLIAM CATHER. No, you can't. Not when he finds things out. It's the between age, Maggie, when men is neither boys nor men—the only time when men never cling to women. It's the time they go quickest to the devil.

HENRY HINDE. I was thinking myself of giving the lad a good schooling over in Liverpool. I had a feeling as I was coming over in the boat that maybe if I was to have the child trained for a minister, he could wipe out some of the debt I owe to God.

MRS. CATHER. Do you hear that, Maggie! Henry's going to make a minister of Willie. Sure, the child'll be a credit to you yet.

MAGGIE CATHER. He's a credit to me now.

WILLIAM CATHER. Aye, Maggie, he is.

SAMUEL HINDE. I'm sure it's queer and considerate of Henry considering what he might do.

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MAGGIE CATHER. If I was to marry you, Henry, would you treat the child the same as you would one that was not a—not a

HENRY HINDE. I'll treat him just the same as if he was a child of God instead of a child of sin.

MAGGIE CATHER (*bitterness returning to her voice*). It wasn't his fault.

HENRY HINDE. The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.

MAGGIE CATHER. Aye, and you'll take damned good care my child doesn't escape. You'll hurt him, and say it's the will of God!

SAMUEL HINDE. Maggie Cather, your language is most unbecoming!

HENRY HINDE. She is possessed of a devil, father. Leave her to me. I'll save her soul by the help of God.

MRS. CATHER. Maggie, dear, say you'll have him.

WILLIAM CATHER. It'll be all right for the child, Maggie.

MAGGIE CATHER. I'll think about it.

HENRY HINDE. I must know now. It's not me you're answering, it's God Himself. You can't put God off.

WILLIAM CATHER. Maybe, if we were to leave Maggie to talk it over with you alone, Henry, you could both come to a decision. Jane and me'll just show your father a shed I'm putting up in the garden for the leather. Come on, Sam.

SAMUEL HINDE (*jovially*). Aye, indeed, William, that's the queer good notion of yours. I was just going to make it myself. Aw, you know, when a man and a woman get together, sure, they like to be alone. It's a queer thing when you come to think it over; but there it is. Och, aye! human beings is a funny lot, William. They are that. Well, well, let's go and have a look at your shed.

Exit Samuel by the scullery.

MRS. CATHER. Maggie, dear, you'll take him, won't you? Don't be proud with him. Men can't stand pride,

Maggie. Just take him, dear, and he'll make you a respectable woman again.

WILLIAM CATHER. Come on, woman, come on. All right, Maggie, all right.

They go out together.

HENRY HINDE. Maggie, I haven't much time.

MAGGIE CATHER. Did you ever love me, Henry ?

HENRY HINDE. I suppose I liked you, Maggie.

MAGGIE CATHER. But you don't love me now ?

HENRY HINDE. It's ten years since I saw you last.

MAGGIE CATHER. Do you love this minister's daughter, your father was talking about ?

HENRY HINDE. That's neither here nor there, Maggie. When God tells to put our desires aside, we've got to bow our heads and say, Thy Will, O Lord, not ours, be done.

MAGGIE CATHER. Is she a good woman ?

HENRY HINDE. Aye, she is.

MAGGIE CATHER. She never had a child.

HENRY HINDE. No, she's a good woman.

MAGGIE CATHER. She's worthy of you, maybe.

HENRY HINDE. Aye, she is. She's worthy of any good man.

MAGGIE CATHER. And I suppose I'm not worthy of you.

HENRY HINDE. You have fallen short of the glory of God.

MAGGIE CATHER. We both fell at the same time, Henry.

HENRY HINDE. I'm saved and you're not. I'm in a state of grace, and you're in a state of sin.

MAGGIE CATHER. Then I'm not as good as you are ?

HENRY HINDE. No, you're not.

MAGGIE CATHER. If I was saved, too, would I be as good as you are ?

HENRY HINDE. That's for God to say, Maggie, not me.

MAGGIE CATHER. Do you think I'd be as good as you. Leave God out of it for a minute. If I committed a sin, you committed one, too.

HENRY HINDE. I'm not denying it.

MAGGIE CATHER. Aye, but you think I'm a bigger

sinner nor you were ; and if I was saved, too, you'd still think I was worse nor you, wouldn't you ?

HENRY HINDE. I would.

MAGGIE CATHER. Why would you ?

HENRY HINDE. Because you're a woman. Because it was through women that sin first came into the world to damn the souls of men. Because it's women that keeps sin in the world with their shameful, lustful bodies. God Himself came down from Heaven to save men from their sins, and suffered the pangs of hell that they might be saved, and sin be swept out of the world. But man turns from the high God to the low woman to his own damnation, and God may weep in His Heaven for the souls of men for ever, and no man will heed Him. Aw, the sin and the shame that women have brought into the world ! Every soul that writhes in hell was sent there by a woman.

MAGGIE CATHER. You want to marry me, Henry ?

HENRY HINDE. Because its a debt I owe to God. If I could save your soul I'd be paying Him back.

MAGGIE CATHER. And if I don't marry you ?

HENRY HINDE. I shall have tried all the same. I can do no more.

MAGGIE CATHER. Henry, you're worse nor I thought you. You're not thinking of me, nor the wrong you did. It's yourself you're thinking of. You're afraid of God, and you want to use me to buy Him off. You can well call yourself a God-fearing man, Henry. I'm nothing to you. The child you're the father of is nothing to you. You're just frightened out of your wits for fear you should go to hell for all you're saved. I won't marry you. I'm as good as you are for all I'm not saved. I'm better nor you are, for I'm not afraid of God. (*She goes to the door leading to the scullery.*) Come on in, will you.

Samuel, Jane and William enter in the order named.

MRS. CATHER. Have you took him, yet ?

MAGGIE CATHER. No. Father, I've decided not to marry Henry.

WILLIAM CATHER. You're sure, Maggie ?

MAGGIE CATHER. I am, father.

WILLIAM CATHER. Maybe, you know best, Maggie

MRS. CATHER. William Cather, will you stand there and let your daughter make a fool of herself ?

SAMUEL HINDE. I must say I think you're right, Mrs. Cather.

WILLIAM CATHER. We don't want to know what you think, Sam. Jane, you needn't say any more.

MRS. CATHER. I will say more. I've been patient all these years, and said nothing, but I'll be patient no more. We're a shamed family. Yes, we are. A bastard in the house ! There never was no shame in my family, no, nor yours either, William Cather, before Maggie.

WILLIAM CATHER. Well, well, it can't be helped.

MRS. CATHER. And when she has a chance of putting herself right, and making a respectable woman of herself, she hangs back, and won't take it. And you stand by, and let her do it.

MAGGIE CATHER. I am a respectable woman.

MRS. CATHER. You're not, you know you're not. You're a bad woman, you know you are. Maybe, if the truth was known, you led this good man into the trouble !

WILLIAM CATHER. Hold your tongue, woman ! My God, if you speak like that, I'll strike you down.

MRS. CATHER. I'm your wife, William Cather, and I've been a good wife to you, too. I've submitted to you in everything since we were married. I've stood by, and bore cuts from people that was lower-born nor me because of Maggie. I've stood them without saying anything because you told me to. But I hoped and prayed to God that some day Henry'd come back, and make her a respectable woman again. I was that glad when he came in with Sam, and said he'd marry her !—and now,—aw, William, William, make her marry him. Henry, you'll take her still, won't you ?

HENRY HINDE. Aye, I'll take her still

SAMUEL HINDE. I'm sure it's very magnanimous of you, Henry, after the way you've been treated.

WILLIAM CATHER. It's for Maggie to say, not for me.

MRS. CATHER. Ask her again, Henry.

HENRY HINDE. Maggie Cather, I solemnly ask you before God your Maker, to marry me.

MAGGIE CATHER. No.

HENRY HINDE. I'll give you another chance, Maggie. Will you marry me ?

MAGGIE CATHER. No.

SAMUEL HINDE. Well, I suppose there's nothing for it, but to go home. It's a pity you wasted your money coming over, Henry.

MRS. CATHER. No, don't go yet, Henry. Give her time to think it over. When she sees the child she'll change her mind. I'll go and get him.

WILLIAM CATHER. Stay where you are.

HENRY HINDE. Maggie, for the last time, will you marry me ?

MAGGIE CATHER. Am I as good as you ?

HENRY HINDE. You know what I said before. Will you marry me ?

MAGGIE CATHER. No, no, no.

HENRY HINDE. Very well, then, Maggie, I'll just say good-bye.

SAMUEL HINDE. That's your last chance, my lady. You'll get no more. Heth, you're a fine one to be putting on airs. Anyone would think you were a decent woman by the way you talk.

WILLIAM CATHER. Samuel Hinde, if you don't want to be hurried before your Maker before your time, you'll get out of this house without another word.

SAMUEL HINDE. Aw, indeed. I like the conceit of you. That man could buy and sell you and your daughter twice over, and not notice it. He's a gentleman, and could marry the daughter of a minister, but he's good enough to come and offer to marry the daughter of a

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cobbler that's disgraced herself ; and he's treated like dirt. A man that has a shop and two assistants !

WILLIAM CATHER. Aye, we heard all that before, Sam. You needn't wait any longer.

SAMUEL HINDE. Come on, Henry. Sure, you're only demeaning yourself here.

HENRY HINDE. I came here to do the will of God. I've done my best. (*He shuts his eyes and prays.*) Lord, Thou knowest the weakness of Thy servant. If I have failed to move this sinful woman's heart through lustful desires after another, forgive me, O Lord, for Thy Name's Sake. Amen. I'll say good-bye, to you, William. If we should never meet on this side of eternity, I would bid you consider this. What Shall It Profit a Man if He Gain the Whole World and Lose His Own Soul. Good-bye to you all.

Samuel and Henry Hinde go out together.

MAGGIE CATHER. Was I wrong, father ?

WILLIAM CATHER. God only knows, Maggie.

MRS. CATHER. It's a sin, it's a sin. To throw away the chance of being respectable.

MAGGIE CATHER. There isn't much difference between you and me, mother. You've had a child, and so have I.

MRS. CATHER. I'm a married woman.

MAGGIE CATHER. You've only been to the minister, and I haven't. There's not much difference between us. Maybe, I'm a better woman nor you. I had a son, and you only had a girl.

MRS. CATHER (*in dreadful fury as though she would strike her daughter*). How dare you ? How dare you make a mock of me ?

WILLIAM CATHER. Jane, woman, you forget yourself. You're an old woman. You shouldn't be so bitter, Maggie.

MRS. CATHER. Why wouldn't you marry him ? Wasn't he good enough ?

MAGGIE CATHER. He was too good. If you heard what

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he said to me. He said I was a sinful, lustful woman, and could never be as good as he is. It wasn't me he was thinking of; it was himself. I'm not needing to marry, but if I do, I'll marry to save my own soul, and not Henry Hinde's.

WILLIAM CATHER. Aw, well, dear, it doesn't matter about Henry. Maybe, you were right not to have him. *(He pats her affectionately on the shoulder.)*

MAGGIE CATHER. I hope I was, father.

WILLIAM CATHER. I hope so, dear. You never know. *(He goes out through the scullery door to the garden. Maggie takes up her shawl, and goes into the bedroom, leaving Mrs. Cather weeping by the fire.)*

THE CRITICS

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

MR. BARBARY

MR. QUACKS

MR. QUARTZ

MR. BAWLAWNEY

AN ATTENDANT

SCENE.—*The lobby of the Abbey Theatre, Dublin.*

AUTHOR'S NOTE TO "THE CRITICS"

I desire to acknowledge my debt to the dramatic critics of Dublin for much of the dialogue in this play. I lifted many of the speeches, making no alteration in them, from the criticism of "The Magnanimous Lover" which were printed in Dublin newspapers on the day after its first production.

THE CRITICS

*Or, A New Play at the Abbey: Being a
Little Morality for the Press*

THE SCENE is the lobby of the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. It is evening, and a new play is being performed for the first time by the Irish Players. Part of it has been performed, and the last act is about to be played when MR. BARBARY enters the lobby from the street. He is a stout, good-tempered looking man, with a habit of speaking to one as if he were uttering the strictest privacies. He has a strong Belfast accent. He goes up to an ATTENDANT.

MR. BARBARY. Is this the Abbey Theatre, can you tell me ?

ATTENDANT. It is, sir.

MR. BARBARY. Man-dear ! I never was in the place before. (*He looks about him.*) It isn't much of a buildin', is it ?

ATTENDANT. Ah, it's not so bad, sir.

MR. BARBARY. The Tivoli's bigger. You know that's what I go by. The size of the theatre. The bigger they are, the better they are. It was a Morgue, this place, one time ?

ATTENDANT. I believe it was.

MR. BARBARY. That's a bad end for a Morgue—bein' turned into a theatre. They're doin' a new play here the night, aren't they ?

ATTENDANT. They are, sir.

MR. BARBARY. Is there any disorder ?

ATTENDANT. I haven't heard any yet, but the play's not over.

MR. BARBARY. Ah, well that's all I come to find out about. I couldn't get here any sooner, and if there had been a row, and me not here, it would have been very awkward for me.

ATTENDANT. Why, sir ? Are you a peeler ?

MR. BARBARY. No, I'm a dramatic critic. For the time bein', anyhow. I don't do this sort of work regularly. I'm only doin' it to oblige the office. These places where they have "classy" stuff aren't much in my line. I generally report the proceedin's of the City Corporation. Now, that's good fun ! Dramatic criticism's nothin' to that. I never was in this hole in my life before, but I'll bet a bob there's more sport in the Corporation in two minutes nor there is in this theatre in two years—except, of course, when there's a riot, an' then they're about equal. The man who does this work as a rule is sick, so they asked me to take it on. What sort of a play is it, do you know ?

ATTENDANT. I don't know, sir. I haven't had time to see it yet. Will you not go in yourself and look at it ?

MR. BARBARY. Och, I'm all right where I am. (*He seats himself on a settee.*) Have you got a licence here ?

ATTENDANT. No sir. We can let you have some lemonade or coffee.

MR. BARBARY. Och, away out of that with you. I know now why the place isn't popular. (*With great disgust.*) Coffee or lemonade ! I suppose this piece is one of these Irish plays.

ATTENDANT. I'm not sure. They've been doin' some foreign plays lately.

MR. BARBARY. Foreign plays ! What's the good of foreign plays ? You'r only encouragin' foreigners, doin' that. That's all ! Of course, it's nothin' to do with me. I'm not much of a man for plays at any time. What I like is a good song an' dance. Somethin' with a bit of go

in it. Now, there was a woman used to come to the Tivoli. . . . Here, come here till I tell you! (*He gets up and bends confidentially over the ATTENDANT.*) She used to sing a song, now, that was great sport. I can hardly remember the name of it, but it was somethin' like this :

(Sings) " Our lodger's such a nice young man,
Such a nice young mar is he! . . . "

Ah, did you ever hear that song ?

ATTENDANT. I did not, sir.

MR. BARBARY. Now, that's what *I* call a song. It has a bit of meanin' in it, a song like that. I'll bet a bob you don't hear songs like that in this place.

ATTENDANT. No, sir, you don't.

MR. BARBARY. This is one of your high-class theatres, isn't it ? Where they play intellectual things ?

ATTENDANT. I've heard it called that, sir.

MR. BARBARY. I thought as much by the look of it. Tumblin' to bits ! You know, my boy, that's what's the matter with the place. They ought to bring it up-to-date. Two-shows-a-night, that's the style. Now, supposin' they were to turn it into a picture-palace or a music-hall where you could hear a good song an' dance, with performin' elephants an' a comic juggler, man-alive, the place would be a gold mine. What's the good of writin' Irish plays for Irish people ? Dammit, they don't want to be reminded of their nationality. They want to forget about it. Who do you think cares a curse about high-class stuff in this country ? Nobody, only a lot of cranks, an' they haven't enough money between them to pay the gas bill, let alone the actors' salaries. I met one of these cranks the other day, an' he was foamin' at the mouth about a lot of pictures that some man called Lane was tryin' to get rid of. Och, by the Holy Smoke, I thought the man was demented mad ! What does anyone want with pictures here, says I, when they've

got the illustrated papers. You ought to have seen the look on his face when I said that. (*He goes off into guffaws of laughter.*) What's the name of the man at the head of this place? The chap that writes the bits of portry?

ATTENDANT. Do you mean Mr. Yeats?

MR. BARBARY. Aye, that's his name. (*Laughing.*) Do you know I tried to read a book of his one time, and I couldn't make anythin' out of it at all. I was reared in Belfast, you know, and they haven't much use for portry up there. That's the secret of Belfast's greatness. But all the same, we know what portry is. I learned pieces in school, "The Bells of Shandon" an' "Casabianca," but I never learned anythin' the like of this stuff. Well, anyway, what I wanted to say was this. If I was to go to this Mr. Yeats and tell him about my plan for popularisin' his theatre, what do you think he'd give me for the idea?

ATTENDANT. I wouldn't like to say, sir.

MR. BARBARY. Do you think he wouldn't entertain the proposal?

ATTENDANT. I don't think he would, sir.

MR. BARBARY. Well, they'll have to do somethin' with it. I hear the place isn't popular at all. The dramatic critic on our paper can't bear it. He says to me the other day: "They don't want a dramatic critic round there," says he, "they want a sanitary inspector." That was his sarcasm. "An' I'm not that," says he. "Sure, never despair," says I. It's him that's sick. It's not much of a job, you know, bein' a dramatic critic in Dublin.

ATTENDANT. Isn't it, sir?

MR. BARBARY. No. That's what they start you on, when you're learnin' your job as a reporter, an' if you show any signs of talent at all, they promote you to be a leader-writer, an' then if you're any good they send you to report the futball matches an' the inquests. I'm one of the best men they have on our paper, an' I can tell you it's a queer come-down for me to be here to-night. I

wouldn't like any of my friends to know I'm doin' the work, only I'm that good-natured I couldn't say "No" when they asked me to oblige them. It's a pity you can't tell me anythin' about the piece.

ATTENDANT. Well, I've heard it's a tragedy.

MR. BARBARY. Tragedy! (*Makes a noise with his tongue against his palate.*) Sure, what's the good of puttin' them things on the stage. Tragedies is happenin' every day. I saw a dog run over by a motor-car at Balls Bridge, an' it was a prize dog, too. I writ a paragraph about 'tal, an' called it "A Tragical Occurrence at Balls Bridge," but sure you don't want the like of that on the stage. I like laughin' an' enjoyin' myself, an' I'm not goin' to pay money to be made miserable. I tell you, you wouldn't want to see no tragedies if you were on a newspaper. That's a tragedy in itself.

ATTENDANT. You ought to go in an' see a bit of the play, you know!

MR. BARBARY. Och, can't I ask some one about it as the people come out? All I want to know is, is there any disorder. My paper comes out in the evenin', an' they can easily make up a notice of the play out of the mornin' papers. (*He takes the "Winning Post" out of his pocket.*) Man, there's a great yarn in this paper this week, about a young lady of title and a chauffeur. Come on over here til I read it to you!

ATTENDANT. Ah, it's all right, sir. I'd rather not.

MR. BARBARY (*settling himself down in comfort*). Well, just as you like; but you're missin' a good thing. (*Sarcas- tically.*) Mebbe you'd rather be lookin' at the tragedy!

(*The ATTENDANT strolls to the door of the theatre and looks out into the street.* MR. BARBARY hums a popular song:

"Who were you with last night?

Who were you with last night?

It wasn't your sister, it wasn't your ma. . . .

Ah, ah, ah, ah, aha-ha-ha-ha-ha! . . ."

(The door leading from the theatre to the lobby is flung violently open, and MR. QUACKS appears.)

MR. QUACKS. Disgusting! Disgraceful! This is the worst outrage that has ever been perpetrated on the Irish people!

MR. BARBARY *(throwing his paper down and jumping to his feet excitedly.)* Has there been a row? Is anyone hurt?
(The sound of applause comes from the theatre.)

MR. QUACKS. Row! There ought to have been one, but there hasn't. Listen to them cheering! Listen to them! Oh, what is Ireland coming to! I am glad that I did not bring my wife to see this play.

MR. BARBARY. Is it as bad as that?

MR. QUACKS. Bad! It's horrible! It's worse than "The Magnanimous Lover," and that was worse than "Blanco Posnet," and that was worse than "The Play-boy"—and the "Playboy" . . .

MR. BARBARY *(to the ATTENDANT).* I wish now I'd taken your advice an' gone in to see the piece. *(To MR. QUACKS.)* Here, tell us what it's all about, will you?

MR. QUACKS. I cannot sully my lips with the unutterable stuff.

MR. BARBARY. Och, now, you're not as good as all that. Besides, there's nobody here but me an' this chap. Come on, now! *(He fumbles in his pocket.)* Here, wait a minute till I get my notebook out. *(Pulls notebook out of his pocket.)* Go on, now. Tell me the worst.

MR. QUACKS. No, no, I cannot think . . .

MR. BARBARY. Ah, now, you'll be all right in the mornin'. We ought to have a good headline for this. What do you think of "Shockin' Outrage at the Abbey Theatre. How Long Will Dublin Tolerate It?" You could make two headlines out of that.

MR. QUACKS. The piece is abominable, outrageous, indecent. It—it left a nauseous taste in my mouth.

MR. BARBARY. Man-alive, do you tell me that now? Was there anything—you know—in it?

MR. QUACKS. There was everything in it that ought

not to have been in it. When I think of the fair name of the Irish people, when I ponder upon the purity of the Irish women, when I reflect upon the freedom from indecency of our Irish journals, when I think of the fortitude and patience they show when they write of strikes, I can hardly find words with which to express my abhorrence of this beastly outrage.

MR. BARBARY (*scribbling hard*). Well, you're doin' your best anyway. Don't talk so quick or I'll never get the half of it down

MR. QUACKS. It is too bad that yet again an effort should be made to destroy the fair fame of Dublin's proud city . . .

MR. BARBARY. "Where the girls are so pretty" That's a great song, that. Go on, this is the right sort of stuff. It's better nor a leadin' article in the *Independent* on Larkin. Let yourself go, my son! "Fair fame of Dublin's proud city." That's where you were!

MR. QUACKS. Fair fame of Dublin's proud city . . . Are you interviewing me? . . .

MR. BARBARY. Ah, man, don't interrupt yourself. You've the loveliest eloquence I ever heard outside the Corporation. Go on, now.

MR. QUACKS. Fair fame of Dublin's proud city as a centre of what is good in art. . . .

MR. BARBARY (*laughing*). Man, you ought to hear that crank on them pictures. Art, says he, there's no art in the place, nothin' but a lot of hucksters gropin' in a greasy till for ha'pence.

MR. QUACKS (*ignoring interruption*) and dramatic literature by the production of this gross and abominable play.

MR. BARBURY. No, that's too strong. It can't be as bad as that!

MR. QUACKS. It is, and worse than that.

(*The door leading from the theatre to the lobby is again violently opened, and this time two frantic critics emerge from the auditorium—MR. QUARTZ and MR. BAWLAWNEY.*)

MR. QUARTZ (*sinking heavily on the settee*). In the name of God, what's it all about ?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. Did you ever see anything like it ?

MR. BARBARY. Well, I didn't see it at all, but I wish to heaven I had. I'll come the morrow night, no matter what happens.

MR. QUACKS. To-morrow night ! There must not be any performance to-morrow night. This must be the first and last performance, or there is no power left in Irish journalism.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. Think, think of the little girls who sell chocolates and programmes ! We are hardened men of the world, but these little ones, in the name of common decency, should at least be excluded from the theatre, and not forced, by reason of their employment, to hear the sickening and dirty things which the audience to-night, such as it is, paid to tolerate.

MR. BARBARY (*to MR. BAWLAWNEY*). Now, don't start talkin' about the childher, or they'll think you're tryin' to kidnap them.

MR. QUARTZ (*slightly maudlin*). Will some one tell me what it is about ?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. No, no, do not do that. Spare us from a repetition of the pernicious rubbish.

MR. BARBARY. Ah, now, don't be keepin' it all to yourself. Don't forget I didn't see it at all, an' although I've got near half-a-column here in my book about it, and two or three headlines, I'd like to know somethin' about it. Now, what's the plot. Mebbe, you'd like to whisper it.

MR. QUACKS. Tell him, tell him. He is a strong man.

MR. QUARTZ. It's no good asking me. I couldn't understand it at all. The first thing I saw, when I got to my seat, was a ghost walking about the stage.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. No, no, no, not a ghost. I told you that before, Quartz. It was a leprechaun. That's the influence of Yeats. Anyone can see that. (*To BARBARY*.) These unfortunate young dramatists are under the influence of Yeats, and Yeats doesn't like ghosts.

MR. BARBARY. I don't like them myself.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. All he cares about is fairies and leprechauns.

MR. QUARTZ. I tell you it was a ghost. Do you think I don't know a ghost when I see one?

MR. BARBARY. Well, whatever it was, what was it doin'?

MR. QUACKS. We must bring this piece to the notice of the Vigilance Committee. There are noble-minded young men in Ireland who spend their Sundays in confiscating improper newspapers. Why should they confine their good work to the Press, by which we earn a livelihood? Why should they not turn their attention to the stage? . . .

MR. BARBARY (*to ATTENDANT*). Here, just give this gentleman a drink of somethin' strong—his nerves is out of order.

ATTENDANT. I'm sorry, sir, we've nothin' but lemonade and coffee.

MR. BARBARY. Ah, that wouldn't do him any good! (*To BAWLAWNEY and QUARTZ.*) Here, you two, whichever of you is tellin' the tale, tell it, but don't start tellin' it thegither.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. I refuse to discuss the piece. I am a married man. . . .

MR. BARBARY. That's no disgrace. You, Mr. Quartz, you tell it.

MR. QUARTZ. I don't mind the play at all. I didn't understand it. But I do object to the language. I can't bear to hear bad language on the stage.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. It's all that Robinson's fault.

MR. BARBARY. What Robinson? I know two or three.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. The man who manages the theatre. He wrote a play called "Harvest" . . . well! I know for a fact that he reads every play that comes into the theatre, and if it hasn't got any bad words in it, he rejects it, or else he puts some in.

MR. QUARTZ. Do you say that, now?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. I do. I assert it fearlessly. I know for a fact that at rehearsals, he stops the performance every ten minutes, and makes the company say "bloody."

MR. BARBARY. Do you mean to tell me he says "bloody?"

MR. BAWLAWNEY. He does.

MR. BARBARY. It's awful, isn't it?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. I've heard a good deal about him. They say he beats his wife.

MR. QUACKS. What! One of the pure-minded women of Ireland?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. It's because he reads Strindberg.

MR. QUARTZ. Now, that's not true, Mr. Bawlawney. He hasn't got a wife. I do know that much.

MR. QUACKS. Well, if he had, he would be certain to beat her. To think of one of my countrywomen having to endure

MR. BAWLAWNEY. And then Yeats comes along, and he puts a fairy or a leprechaun in the play. Look at the piece to-night. The curtain was hardly up before a leprechaun came on the stage.

MR. QUARTZ. I tell you it wasn't a leprechaun; it was a ghost.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. Well, it was a supernatural being, whatever it was. Yeats is always going after things like that. Look at his poems. . . .

MR. QUACKS. Poems, do you call them! Give me Moore's Melodies!

MR. BARBARY (*to* QUARTZ). I never knew George Moore wrote poetry.

MR. QUARTZ. It's another Moore.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. And when Yeats and Robinson have finished with the piece, Lady Gregory comes along and puts in some of her Kiltartan dialect. There was a speech to-night that I'll wager was written by her. Did you hear it, Quartz?

MR. QUARTZ. I did not.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. Yes, you did. It was that speech,

“That he is mad, ’tis true : ’tis true, ’tis pity, and pity ’tis ’tis true.” That came straight out of Kiltartan.

MR. BARBARY. What does it mean ?

MR. QUARTZ. What does any of the stuff mean ? I know Lady Gregory had a hand in this piece. There’s always a mad person in her plays. She can’t keep them out of it. But I’ll expose the lot of them. Mr. Robinson and his bloodies ! There was one speech that I copied down as the man was saying it, and I think it is the limit.

MR. BARBARY. Read it til us.

MR. QUARTZ. Ah, it was terrible. (*He takes a piece of paper out of his pocket.*) I copied it down, I tell you, and here it is. “O, most wicked speed, to post with such dexterity to incestuous sheets.” Now, what do you think of that, now ? There’s language for you.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. That’s Robinson’s style. I recognise it.

MR. BARBARY. I don’t know what it means. It’s not funny anyway, whatever it means, and if it’s not funny, there’s no excuse for it. You haven’t told me the plot yet.

MR. QUACKS. Let him know the state of degradation into which this temple of Thespis has fallen.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. Well, Mr. Barbary, as far as I can make out, the piece is about a young fellow that lost his da. . . .

MR. BARBARY. Is it “The Playboy of the Western World” you’re talkin’ about ?

MR. QUACKS. Worse than the “Playboy.”

MR. BARBARY. Did he kill his da ?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. No, but another relative did. It was his uncle that did it, and then the uncle married his sister-in-law.

MR. BARBARY. No.

MR. QUACKS.! Yes, Mr Barbary His deceased brother’s wife. A play with a plot like that in Ireland ! Think, gentlemen, of the slur on the women of our country. Think !

MR. BARBARY. Och, what’s the good of thinkin’ about

them. They can think for themselves. Well, what happened after he married her? Did he get into trouble with the police?

MR. QUARTZ. Don't describe the play any further, Mr. Bawlawney. Mr. Barbary, it is too disgusting to be described. I never thought to live to see the day when such a piece would be done in Dublin.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. It was so morbid. A girl went out of her mind, and began to sing silly songs, just like the mad girl in "The Full Moon." And then she went and drowned herself. There's a nice cheerful plot for you.

MR. QUACKS. Mr. Barbary, will you believe that the directors of this theatre had the bad taste to put a graveyard on the stage. There were two men digging a grave and throwing up skulls and bones. A cemetery, mark you.

MR. BARBARY. What! A place like Glasnevin?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. The very same.

MR. BARBARY. Well, that is a bit thick. I can stan' as much in the way of a joke as anyone, but that's no joke. Graveyards! An' a man marryin' his deceased brother's wife. . . . Wait a minute, though. It's been made legal, hasn't it? Of course, if it's legal it's all right.

MR. QUACKS. No, it has not been made legal. You may marry your deceased wife's sister, but you may not marry your deceased brother's wife; and therefore I say that this play is a horrible outrage on the instinctive purity of the Irish people. I can sympathise with the young man in the piece in his objection to the marriage, although I think that his language was somewhat indelicate. Incestuous sheets! Sheets!! And women in the theatre, too. How can any nice-minded man sit beside a woman without feeling uncomfortable at the mention of these—these articles of domestic utility.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. And look at the way in which he spoke to his mother. After all, she was his mother, and a mother is a sacred thing, even if she does violate the tables of consanguinity. 'Telling her that the "hey-day of her blood was tame." That's not a proper thing for

a young man to say to his mother or to any woman, particularly an Irish woman. It's most suggestive, I think.

MR. QUARTZ. Yes, and talking about "the rank sweat of an enseamed bed." These young fellows nowadays haven't any reticence.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. It's all Robinson's work.

(There is a burst of applause from the auditorium.)

MR. BARBARY. Well, gentlemen, what are we goin' to do about it? It is plain from what you say that a very disgustin' play has been performed here to-night, but from all I can hear the audience seems to like it.

MR. QUACKS. What an audience! What a shameless crew! Gentlemen, we must get up a crusade in Ireland against this piece and all the Abbey plays. We must demand the immediate institution of a censorship. We must get the young men of the Vigilance Committee to come here and protest against this outrage in the name of the people of Ireland. We must insist that no play shall be produced which does not receive the unqualified approval of the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Dublin, and the Primate of the Church of Ireland, together with that of Captain Craig, Mr. Joseph Devlin, the Marquis of Londonderry, and the Grand Master of the Orange Institution.

MR. BARBARY. Och, is it a speech you're makin', or what is it? I can't understand you at all, Mr. Quacks. Are you coddin' or are you away in the mind?

MR. QUACKS. Mr. Barbary! . . .

MR. BARBARY. Ah, well, it doesn't matter much what way you are—it's all the same. Now, gentlemen, I take it we are all agreed on this point—we're goin' to jump on this play as hard as we can. Are we all agreed on that?

MR. QUACKS. }

MR. BAWLAWNEY. } We are.

MR. QUARTZ. }

MR. BARBARY. Very well, then. I want you to listen to what I've written about the piece so's you can correct it if it's wrong.

MR. QUACKS. Proceed.

MR. BARBARY. Well, listen. And mebbe, Mr. Quacks, you'll try an' forget the women of Ireland for two or three minutes, for I don't want you interruptin' me every while with your lamentations for them. Listen, now! (*He begins to read.*) At a meetin' of the City Corpor. . . . Oh, Holy Smoke, I've putt the wrong beginnin'. Now, wait a minute. I can easily alter that. Horrible Play at the Abbey Theatre! What do you think of that for a first headline?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. I suggest, Infamous Play at the Abbey Theatre.

MR. QUARTZ. Or, Grossly Indecent Play at the Abbey Theatre.

MR. BARBARY. Don't forget that the sub-editors 'll have a go at the headlines. (*With the air of a man who nourishes a grievance.*) Now, between ourselves, all of you, what do you think of sub-editors?

MR. QUACKS. Mr. Barbary, is this a moment in which to discuss sub-editors when a play is being performed in there which is corrupting the minds and souls of the misguided people who are even now cheering it? Each of us had better use the headline that he thinks best in the circumstances. I will call it "An Abbey Outrage."

MR. BARBARY (*making a note*). Well, I'm willin', though I don't mind tellin' you I think we'll give the piece a thunderin' good advertisement. You see, the people that are here to-night probably don't know that the play is an indecent one, an' when they read their papers the morrow mornin', they'll think they've missed somethin', an' they'll come again the morrow night to see what it is they've missed.

MR. QUARTZ. We must do our duty, Mr. Barbary, no matter what the consequences may be.

MR. BARBARY. Now, look here, between ourselves—the public aren't listenin', so we can tell the truth for once—this piece isn't as bad as we're goin' to make out is it?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. Mr. Barbary, you insult us ! Do you think we would write anything that we do not believe ?

MR. BARBARY. I do. You'd get the sack if you didn't. It's yous that is insultin' now. Do you think it is a compliment to me to tell me that I believe all the stuff I write in the paper ?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. We believe all we write.

MR. BARBARY. Do you ? Well, God help you, then !

MR. BAWLAWNEY. *You*, of course, can't believe what you've written about the play, because you haven't seen it.

MR. BARBARY. Ah, what does that matter ! Sure, we don't see half the things we describe. You know as well as you're livin' that a bad "story" is better copy for a paper than a good one, an' you don't think I'm going to let my paper down by praisin' the play, when the whole of yous is goin' to dam it ? I've got to say the same as you, or my editor won't believe I've seen the piece at all.

MR. QUARTZ. I must say, I believe in knowing the facts.

MR. BARBARY (*with terrible contempt*). Facts ! I'd be ashamed to let my paper down because I didn't know the facts. People don't read newspapers for facts. They read 'em to help them to fill up the time between gettin' up in the mornin' an' goin' to bed again. Good Lord, man, if we started printin' facts, the public would go out of its mind. If we were to tell the truth about Dublin, they'd burn the city down. I'm a fact ; you're a fact ; (*pointing to the ATTENDANT*) an' he's a fact ; but you don't think people want to read about us. They want to read about things that never happen. They want to forget that they're alive. They want to be chloroformed, an' that's what our job is. Chloroformin' them !

MR. QUACKS. I disagree entirely with all you say, but we have no time to discuss it now. We have an urgent duty to perform.

MR. BARBARY. All right. Now, I think we ought to have two or three sub-headlines. What do you think of "Violation of the Family" or "Attack on the Sanctity

of Marriage ? ” The like of that would make a snappy headline, an’ it would make ould Aberdeen sit up when he read it.

MR. QUARTZ. Anything at all, so long as we stamp the play as infamous.

MR. BARBARY. Right you are. Let’s go on. (*Reads.*) Last night, at the Abbey Theatre, a fresh insult was offered to the people of Ireland. . . . (*to MR. QUACKS.*) Do you think I should add, “ includin’ the pure-minded women ? ”

MR. QUACKS. I do not care what you say.

MR. BARBARY. Oh ! Well, mebbe, I’d better leave that bit to you. You seem to be an authority on women. (*Reads.*) A play called . . . Hilloa ! I don’t know the name of the piece yet. What’s it called ?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. Here’s my programme.

MR. BARBARY (*taking it and reading the title of the play*). “ The Tragedy of Hamlet ! ” That’s a queer name for a play.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. Hamlet is the name of the young fellow that called his ma out of her name.

MR. BARBARY. But I thought you said it was an Irish piece ?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. I don’t know what kind of a piece it is.

MR. BARBARY. I always thought a hamlet was a place. (*To the ATTENDANT.*) Here, can you tell me is this an Irish piece or is it one of them foreign plays you were talkin’ about ?

MR. QUACKS. What does it matter what kind of play it is ? We must protest against it.

MR. BARBARY. Well, I don’t know. I don’t want to go an’ put my foot in it. Where does it all happen ?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. At a place called Elsinore.

MR. BARBARY. Elsinore ! There’s no place of that name in Ireland. Are you sure it isn’t Greenore ?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. Quite sure.

MR. BARBARY. Mebbe, it’s a made-up name. What do you call the chap that writ it ?

MR. QUARTZ. A fellow called Shakespeare—William Shakespeare.

MR. BARBARY. How do you spell it ? (MR. BAWLAWNEY *spells it for him.*) That's not an Irish name, is it ?

MR. QUARTZ. I never heard it before, but mebbe he comes from Belfast. They have queer names up there.

MR. BARBARY. He does not, then. I come from Belfast myself, an' I never heard the name in my life. I tell you what ! It's mebbe one of them Gaelic names. I wouldn't be a bit surprised now but he's a Gaelic Leaguer. I know a man called Campbell writes his name in Gaelic, an' you can't tell how to say it. It's pronounced different from the way it's spelt. Mebbe, if you were to translate "Shakespeare" into English, it means "Murphy."

MR. QUACKS. Let us go, gentlemen.

(There is a loud burst of applause in the theatre.)

ATTENDANT. The play is over, gentlemen.

(More applause.)

MR. QUACKS. I cannot bear to hear the people of Ireland disgracing themselves like this. Good-night, gentlemen, good-night.

(Rushes out of the theatre. MR. QUARTZ goes to the door leading into the theatre and looks in on the audience.)

MR. QUARTZ. They're standing up and cheering.

MR. BARBARY. They don't know that they're lookin' on at a dirty, obscene, immoral, disgustin' play, do they ?

MR. BAWLAWNEY. It doesn't look as if they did.

MR. BARBARY. Ah, well, they'll know in the mornin' when they see the papers. Come on, now, before they come out. *(They move towards the door leading to the street.)* What did you say was the name of the chap that writ the piece ?

MR. QUARTZ. Shakespeare.

MR. BARBARY. Ah, yes. Shakespeare. That's the queer name. I should think he comes from Cork.

MR. BAWLAWNEY. I wouldn't be surprised. That's where that Robinson comes from. *(They go out.)*

THE ORANGEMAN

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

JOHN M'CLURG,

TOM M'CLURG, *His Son*

JESSIE M'CLURG, *His Wife*

ANDY HAVERON

SCENE : *Kitchen of a Workman's Home in Belfast.*

TIME : *The afternoon of July 11th, 1912.*

THE ORANGEMAN

It is the afternoon of "the eleventh night" of July, 1912. On the morrow, "the twelfth of July," the Orange procession will walk to "the Field." JOHN M'CLURG, a grey bearded man, over fifty years of age, is seated in an arm-chair before the fire, reading the "Belfast Evening Telegraph." He is a man of forceful character, quick in his speech and temper. He is very strong, without being very wise, and he is what the Belfast people call "a fine man"—that is to say, he is a sober, industrious, decent bigot, with a mind like concrete; he believes in hell-fire and predestination, and smells the devil in every Catholic who passes the door of his small kitchen-house in Ballymacarrett, a working-class suburb of Belfast. He is a kindly man up to a point, but he has modelled his conduct on that of the patriarchs in the Old Testament, and he tries to rule his family as if it were a community of performing rabbits with himself as trainer. He has many fine qualities, but they are negatived by a narrow nature and a revolting religious belief. His mind is full of dull augers and ancient rages which, this being "the eleventh night," when the Orange arches are erected in Belfast, are very lively at the moment. There is, however, a second cause of anger. He is suffering from a severe attack of rheumatism, and his leg, heavily wrapped, is resting on a cane-bottomed chair. Rheumatism is not normally a sedative, but rheumatism on "the twelfth of July" is an inexplicable act of Providence. The cause of this is made plain later. JESSIE M'CLURG, his wife, is

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also in the room. She is a slender, imperturbable woman full of the sweetness of the women of Ulster. She is younger than her husband, and is very comely, with grey hair brushed flat on her head. She is full of wisdom and kindness, and her mind is tolerant and beautiful. Her nature is serene and gentle, and although she goes to the same church as her husband and has the same faith as he has, the church and the faith in her become transmuted to something fine and lovely. She moves about the room preparing the evening meal and laying the table which stands beneath the window at the back of the kitchen.

The house is furnished after the fashion of a working-class home into which poverty has not penetrated. A sofa covered with American cloth, two comfortable chairs, several uncomfortable cane-bottom chairs, delft ornaments, a dresser with crockery on it, and the like. There is a cheap oleograph over the mantel-shelf, representing King William the Third in the act of crossing the Boyne. On another wall is a picture revealing the "Secret of England's Greatness." Motto-cards of various shapes, containing quotations from the Bible, are scattered about the walls of the room, together with grocers' almanacs and a calendar issued by the "Belfast News Letter."

JOHN M'CLURG (*putting the paper down by his side*). Isn't it the nice thing now, me lying here with my leg on a chair, hardly able to move, and the morrow the twelfth of July and all!

(MRS. M'CLURG *crosses the room with a plate of toast which she puts before the fire.*)

MRS. M'CLURG. Ah, well, mebbe you're better at home nor tiring yourself out walking to the field. (*She goes back to the dresser.*) Sure, indeed, at your age it's time you gave up processions!

JOHN M'CLURG. That would be a fine thing, wouldn't it? To give up at this time when it's most important I should be there.

MRS. M'CLURG. Sure, there's plenty more'll be there without you going.

JOHN M'CLURG. It doesn't matter how many there's there, I ought to be one of them. I've been an Orangeman thirty years and I've never missed a Twelfth yet. It's the quare come-down, I can tell you, to be crippled like this just at the time when I'm needed most.

MRS. M'CLURG. Ah, sure, what do they need you for? Aren't there plenty of young fellows to take your place?

JOHN M'CLURG. No, indeed, there are not. It's lamentable the way the young men of to-day behave themselves. There's hardly a one of them'll join an Orange Lodge. You would think they didn't take an interest in their country, going off on trips to the Isle of Man the way they do. Tom doesn't take near the interest in it that he ought to.

MRS. M'CLURG. Oh, indeed, he takes plenty.

(There is a knock on the street door.)

JOHN M'CLURG. There's somebody at the door.

MRS. M'CLURG *(going to the hall door at back)*. I wonder if this is Tom? *(She opens the street door.)* Och, is that you, Andy?

ANDY HAVERON *(heard off)*. Ay, Mrs. M'Clurg. Can I come in?

MRS. M'CLURG. Ay, do!

(Enter ANDY HAVERON. MRS. M'CLURG closes the door after ANDY.)

JOHN M'CLURG. How're you, Andy?

ANDY HAVERON. I'm bravely, thank you. *(Crosses to the fire.)* I came round to see how you were! I'm sorry to hear about you bein' bad. *(Sitting down.)*

JOHN M'CLURG. Ay, isn't it just awful! The morrow the Twelfth, too! I was just telling Jessie here that I never missed a Twelfth before since I was a wee lad.

ANDY HAVERON. It's a great pity. They'll miss you for the drumming. I've heard plenty of people saying there wasn't another man in the town was your equal for beating a lambegger.

JOHN M'CLURG. That's true enough! I shouldn't be surprised now if it was in the papers about me not being able to go the morrow. Some of them English papers'll be making out we're not so bitter against Home Rule as we used to be when they hear I'm not going to be in the procession the morrow.

ANDY HAVERON. I wouldn't be a bit surprised.

MRS. M'CLURG. Well, aren't you the foolish fellow, Andy Haveron, to go talking the like of that talk.

ANDY HAVERON. Aw, now, it's not so foolish as you think, but man-a-dear, they'll be quarely sold if they think anything of the sort.

JOHN M'CLURG. I'm just waiting for Tom to come home, and then we'll fix it all up. He's been in the country for a week, at his Uncle Willie's, and he doesn't know yet the way I am with these rheumatics.

ANDY HAVERON. He'll be quaren sorry to hear about it.

JOHN M'CLURG. If it wasn't for him I'd go near distracted mad to think that I can't go to the Field the morrow; but if John M'Clurg can't go, his son can. That'll show the Nationalists what we think of them. I've bate the drum ever since my da give it to me, and I hope Tom'll do the same.

ANDY HAVERON. Ay, you've had the drum a brave while.

JOHN M'CLURG. I have indeed. I carried it to the Field when ould Gladstone brought in his first Bill, and I carried it again when he brought in his second Bill. Man, Andy, it's heart-breaking to think I can't do it this time, too. There isn't a one can put the power into the sticks I can, and that's quaren important.

ANDY HAVERON. You're right, surely! If there wasn't someone there to put a bit of heart into the drumming, the thing wouldn't go well at all. I wonder what sort of a hand Tom'll make of it.

MRS. M'CLURG. I daresay he'll be as good as the next. Andy, you'll stop and have your tea, won't you?

ANDY HAVERON. Aw, thank you, Mrs. M'Clurg, I couldn't think of troubling you.

MRS. M'CLURG. Now, hold your tongue. It's no trouble at all. Tom'll be here in a wee minute and we'll all sit down together.

JOHN M'CLURG. If it should rain the-morrow, and me not there to hearten the men, by the holy smoke the Papishes'll get Home Rule before we know where we are.

MRS. M'CLURG (*at table*). Now, you're not as important as all that, John.

ANDY HAVERON. Aw, indeed he is, Mrs. M'Clurg! The drumming's more important nor the speeches. Nobody listens to them at all when they can read them in the *Telegraph* at their ease the next day.

JOHN M'CLURG. I see by the paper the night there's a man called Smith coming over from England to address the Orangemen.

MRS. M'CLURG. There's many a person by the name of Smith.

JOHN M'CLURG. Well, indeed, I hope he's a credit to his name, for sure there's some people they send over here, God help them, you'd know they were English the minute you put your eyes on them. The *Telegraph* says he's the great orator. Do you know anything about him at all, Andy?

ANDY HAVERON. Only what I read in the paper. (*ANDY goes up to door to hang up his hat.*) He's one of them lawyers.

MRS. M'CLURG. And aren't there enough of them fellows here already without sending any more?

ANDY HAVERON (*returning to his seat*). They do say there isn't a name he can't call you.

JOHN M'CLURG. Do you tell me that now?

ANDY HAVERON. He'll be giving the Catholics the rare roasting. He doesn't care what he says at all. This neighbour of mine says he'll make remarks about your face if he doesn't agree with you. He's the great value.

MRS. M'CLURG. Sure, any corner-boy could do the like of that.

ANDY HAVERON. Aw, well, Mrs. M'Clurg, that's all you

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expect in politics, and if you're doing it at all, you might as well do it thoroughly. I like a good, outspoken orator myself, one that says plum and plain what he means.

JOHN M'CLURG. You're right, Andy. You're right!

ANDY HAVERON. There's no fun in going to a meeting where they're all talking as if it was a Band of Hope. If this man thinks you're a fool, he calls you a damned fool, and you can't argue that away. He's the right sort for us. Did you see that in the paper about the Twelfth being his birthday?

JOHN M'CLURG. Ay. Now, that's a quare coincidence, Andy! There's some meaning in that, if we only knew it. They'll maybe give him an orange sash or something for a present.

MRS. M'CLURG. And what in the name of God would he be doing with the like of that?

JOHN M'CLURG. He might be keeping it in the drawing-room, the same way you keep the musical album that Tom won in the raffle.

ANDY HAVERON. Now, you know, them people gets a quare lot of things give till them. I was reading in the paper the other day about someone sending a book of portry to the King, and I was just wondering to myself what he does with all the stuff that's give him. I should think he has enough of them illuminated addresses to furnish a museum.

JOHN M'CLURG. Aw, I daresay now the King takes a quare interest in them. He'll be leaving them to his sons, sure!

MRS. M'CLURG. Well, I would rather it was him nor me. I wonder what's keeping Tom? (*She rises and goes towards the door.*) I'll just go and see if he's coming.

JOHN M'CLURG. Bring the drum out of the parlour when you come back, and the orange sash.

MRS. M'CLURG (*turning*). Now, what in the name of fortune, do you want them for?

JOHN M'CLURG. Go on, now, and bring them. Sure, I just want to have a look at them.

MRS. M'CLURG. You had a look at them an hour ago, and they're not changed since.

JOHN M'CLURG. Ochone! Aren't you the argying ould woman. Bring them in, for dear sake!

MRS. M'CLURG (*as she goes out*). You would think you were an infant child, the way you go on!

(She goes out.)

JOHN M'CLURG (*calling after her*). Now, be careful how you lift it, woman. I wouldn't have anything happen to it for the world.

MRS. M'CLURG (*heard off*). Aw, it's not that precious.

JOHN M'CLURG (*to ANDY HAVERON*). Women's quaren funny, Andy! They don't seem to understand the importance of things the way a man does. She doesn't take no interest in the Battle of the Boyne. (*There is a sound as of a drum being dropped.*) Holy God, woman, mind what you're doing! You'll have the skins of it burst or something.

ANDY HAVERON. Will I go and help her?

JOHN M'CLURG. Aw, she's right enough.

(Re-enter MRS. M'CLURG carrying a large drum of the kind known in Belfast as a "Lambegger." The drumsticks are on the top of the drum, thrust through the cords.)

MRS. M'CLURG. It's easy for you to be sitting there talking!

JOHN M'CLURG. You know rightly I'd be glad to change places with you.

MRS. M'CLURG (*placing the drum by his side*). There, now! Mebbe, that'll satisfy you!

JOHN M'CLURG. Did you bring the sash with you?

MRS. M'CLURG. I did not. It was as much as I could do to bring the drum.

JOHN M'CLURG. Well, just bring it in, like a good woman.

MRS. M'CLURG. Och, for dear sake!

ANDY HAVERON. Sure, it'll please him, Mrs. M'Clurg. He's had the quare disappointment.

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(She nods her head, and goes again towards the parlour.

JOHN M'CLURG (*proudly*). Man-a-dear, Andy, that's the great drum.

MRS. M'CLURG (*as she goes out*). Sure, there's plenty like it.

JOHN M'CLURG. No, indeed, there's not. There's few drums has the history of that one. Will you bring me the sash now?

MRS. M'CLURG (*at the door*). I suppose you'll have to be getting yourself up just as if you were on the march.

(She goes out. JOHN M'CLURG pulls the drum towards him, touching it affectionately.

JOHN M'CLURG. It's a bit loose, Andy. You might tighten it up, will you?

ANDY HAVERON. Right you are.

(ANDY turns the drum on its side and tightens it up.

JOHN watches him as he does so. He hums a party tune, and ANDY joins in the song.

Up comes the man,
With the shovel in his han',
And he says: "Boys, go no farther!
For we'll tighten up the rope,
And we'll make them curse the Pope,
For the day that King William crossed the water."

(They bang the drum as they sing. They repeat the verse, and then JOHN M'CLURG breaks off.

JOHN M'CLURG. I wonder what's keeping that woman?
(Shouting to his wife.) Will you be long, Jessie?

MRS. M'CLURG (*heard off*). Och, I can't find it anywhere.

JOHN M'CLURG. Isn't it in the cupboard along with the Bible?

(ANDY HAVERON finishes tightening the drum, and lifts it up so that JOHN M'CLURG is able to tap it with one of the sticks. MRS. M'CLURG re-enters, holding the sash in her hand.

MRS. M'CLURG. Quit making that noise, for dear sake! You'll have me deaved if you go on like that. There's your ould sash. I never saw such a man in all me born days for putting things where they can't be found. I searched the parlour through for it.

JOHN M'CLURG. Well, you might have knowed it would be in the cupboard. *(He drapes the sash over his shoulder.)*

MRS. M'CLURG. And how would I know you'd got it inside the big Bible.

JOHN M'CLURG. Well, now, I thought it would be safer there nor anywhere else. Sure, in these days, you never know when a Papish might break into the house and steal sash and drum and all.

MRS. M'CLURG. Well, he'd have his hands full if he was to do the like of that.

JOHN M'CLURG. Aw, now, there's no knowing what a Catholic would do. Is there, Andy?

ANDY HAVERON. There is not. I wouldn't trust a Catholic as far as I could see him.

MRS. M'CLURG. Aw, hould your tongue, for goodness sake. What sort of talk is that?

JOHN M'CLURG. It's the right sort of talk. There's a lot of people running about saying Catholics is as good as Protestants, but let me tell you, they're not. I'm not saying there isn't good Catholics. Thank God, I'm no bigot. But, good or bad, there's something the matter with the whole of them, and you'd do well to mind it.

MRS. M'CLURG. Well, indeed, I'll not mind anything of the sort. I'd be the right fool to be letting that nonsense into my head.

JOHN M'CLURG *(with fearful sarcasm)*. And you want a vote! Well, God help us all when you get it. Did you see if Tom's coming?

MRS. M'CLURG. How could I look for him when I was looking for your ould sash.

JOHN M'CLURG. Well, go on now, will you? *(There is a knock at the door.)* Mebbe, that's him.

(MRS. M'CLURG goes into the hall.)

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ANDY HAVERON. He's brave and late the-night.

JOHN M'CLURG. I suppose something was keeping him. I hope this sash'll fit him all right.

(MRS. M'CLURG *re-enters, followed by her son, Tom M'CLURG.*

MRS. M'CLURG. Hurry up, now, Tom, and don't be keeping the tea waiting.

TOM M'CLURG. Is that you, Andy ?

(*He takes off his hat and coat and hangs them on the back of door.*

ANDY HAVERON. Ay, I just come in to have a wee crack with your da.

TOM M'CLURG. How're you, da ?

JOHN M'CLURG. I'm bad, Tom, very bad.

TOM M'CLURG (*sitting down on the sofa*). What's the matter with your leg ?

MRS. M'CLURG. Your da's got the rheumatism fearful, and the doctor's forbid him to go to the Field the-morrow.

TOM M'CLURG. You don't say so !

JOHN M'CLURG. Ay, that's a fact, Tom. Isn't it the terrible thing, now ? Faith, doctor or no doctor, I'd be there, only I can't move without my leg shooting with the pain.

MRS. M'CLURG. Now, come on up and have your tea. Tom dear, lend me a hand with this table.

ANDY HAVERON. Will I help you, Mrs. M'Clurg ?

MRS. M'CLURG. Just you go on talking to John.

(*Tom takes one end of the table and Mrs. M'CLURG the other, and they carry it into the middle of the room.*

JOHN M'CLURG (*while the table is being carried*). I'd give a year of my life willingly to be able to go the-morrow.

MRS. M'CLURG (*as the table is set down*). Aw, now when your end comes you'll be glad of any odd years you can lay your hands on. Sit up, now, to the table. Come on, Andy !

ANDY HAVERON (*coming to the table and sitting down*). It's quaren kind of you.

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MRS. M'CLURG. Not a bit of it. Tom, reach up the toast, will you? And see your da doesn't forget to eat his tea. Dear knows, he'd go on talking about Orangemen and politics till he'd die of hunger.

TOM M'CLURG. Here, da!

(He passes the toast round the table.)

JOHN M'CLURG. Did you see the Orange arch at the head of the Shankill, Tom, as you were coming home?

TOM M'CLURG *(casually)*. I didn't notice it.

JOHN M'CLURG *(indignantly)*. You didn't notice it!

ANDY HAVERON. It's the finest arch ever was seen in this town.

JOHN M'CLURG. I give two shillings towards it myself.

MRS. M'CLURG. You might have found a better use for your money.

JOHN M'CLURG. What better use could you put your money too nor that, will you tell me?

MRS. M'CLURG. Aw, indeed, there's many a thing you could do with it if you only had the wit.

JOHN M'CLURG *(drinking)*. Now, don't be talking like that, Jessie, or I'll mebbe loss my temper. I know well you think nothing of these things, but that's no reason why you should make fun of them.

(He spills some of the tea on his sash.)

MRS. M'CLURG. Look at you! Spilling your tea down your sash.

JOHN M'CLURG. Now, was there none of you saw me doing that? Tom, you might have told me about it.

TOM M'CLURG. Och! I wasn't looking.

JOHN M'CLURG. Weren't looking! I don't suppose you noticed I had it on. Isn't it the quare thing for me to have a son and a wife that doesn't take no interest in the Protestant religion.

TOM M'CLURG. Sure, an Orange sash isn't the Protestant religion.

MRS. M'CLURG. And, dear knows, a wee drop of tea down the front of it'll do it no harm.

JOHN M'CLURG. Aw, you're all quaren funny. That's

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the sort's in this house, Andy. (*To his wife.*) Here, help me off with it, will you? (MRS. M'CLURG *goes round to the front of table, and then to her husband's side, and takes the sash from him. As she moves away she collides with the drum.*) Mind what you're doing, woman! Anyone would think you had a grudge against it, the way you keep charging it.

(MRS. M'CLURG *places the sash on drum and returns to her seat.*)

MRS. M'CLURG. Are you ready for any more tea, Andy?

ANDY HAVERON. No, thank you, Mrs. M'Clurg. I've done rightly.

MRS. M'CLURG. Tom!

TOM M'CLURG. No, ma, I'm finished.

JOHN M'CLURG. Well, if you're finished, you can just attend to me for a minute. Jessie, just redd away this table. Andy'll lend you a hand with it.

ANDY HAVERON. I will gladly.

(ANDY HAVERON *and* MRS. M'CLURG *put the table back to its place.*)

JOHN M'CLURG. Hold out your arm, Tom.

TOM M'CLURG (*astonished*). What for?

JOHN M'CLURG. Now, do as I tell you. Go on, hold it out. Put the two of them out. I want to feel your muscles.

TOM M'CLURG. For dear sake, da!

(ANDY HAVERON *seats himself near the fire.* MRS. M'CLURG *removes the table things and puts them in the scullery.*)

JOHN M'CLURG (*sharply*). Go on, now!

(TOM M'CLURG *holds out his arms and his father presses the muscles of both of them.*)

MRS. M'CLURG (*as she goes into the scullery*). You would think he was a prize fowl, the way you're prodding him. (*She goes out.*)

JOHN M'CLURG. They could be firmer, but they'll do all right. (*To* ANDY HAVERON.) He'll be as good as myself—almost.

ANDY HAVERON. I'm sure he will.

TOM M'CLURG (*sitting down on the sofa*). Mebbe, you wouldn't have no objection to telling me what this is all about? Are you thinking of selling me or what?

JOHN M'CLURG. You'll just do rightly, Tom.

TOM M'CLURG. Do for what?

JOHN M'CLURG. Tom, my son, I'm going to let you carry the drum the-morrow.

TOM M'CLURG. Carry the what?

JOHN M'CLURG. The drum, Tom. If I can't go to the Field myself, you can. There'll be a M'Clurg of some sort in the procession the morrow to show the Fenians what the Protestants think of them.

ANDY HAVERON. Ay, that's the style. It's fine to think of the children doing what their father's done before them. It is, indeed. Your father, John, and his father done it, and you've done it, and Tom'll do it, and his children and their children.

(*Enter MRS. M'CLURG, who has now finished the clearing away of the tea things.*)

MRS. M'CLURG. For the love of God, Andy Haveron, will you hold your tongue. Do you think there's going till be Orangemen beating drums to the end of the world? I hope to my goodness, people'll have sense some day.

JOHN M'CLURG. You just keep quiet now, like a good woman. We've got some serious discourse to talk about. You can listen if you like, but we don't want you to keep on putting in your neb every minute or two.

MRS. M'CLURG. Well, with the kind of talk you've been putting out of your mouth so far, I don't think I'll want to disturb you.

(*MRS. M'CLURG seats herself near the fire, and begins to darn some socks.*)

JOHN M'CLURG. Bring the drum over here, will you. Tom? And Andy'll strap it across your shoulders, and then I'll give you a lesson or two in beating it.

TOM M'CLURG. It's no good your talking to me, da; I can't go.

The Orangeman

JOHN M'CLURG. You can't go ?

TOM M'CLURG. Yes, da, I can't go.

JOHN M'CLURG. You can't go ! Was anyone asking you whether you'd go or not. You can do your best the morrow and try not to disgrace your name. (*He pulls the drum towards him.*) That drum's been in this family since before I was born, and there's never been a M'Clurg was ashamed to carry it yet. Look at them marks there. (*He points to some dark stains on the skin of the drum.*) That's blood. My blood ! I've beat the drum so hard that the blood's come out of my knuckles and marked the skin. Look at it, Andy.

ANDY HAVERON. Ay, I'm looking, Mr. M'Clurg.

JOHN M'CLURG. That'll show you the strength I put in the drumming. And my father, and his father, too, was the same. You'll go to the Field the morrow, Tom, and put your blood on the drum the way I put mine.

MRS M'CLURG. Sure, it's the only blood you ever spilt, except when you cut yourself with the penknife. If you never spill any more any other way, you'll not come to much harm.

JOHN M'CLURG (*exploding with rage*). Maybe, I'll be spilling some, some other way. Papishes' blood !

(TOM M'CLURG rises and goes towards the peg on which his coat is suspended.)

TOM M'CLURG. You make me tired the way you're always going on. A lot of ould men gabbling all day about Popery.

(*He puts his coat on and reaches for his cap.*)

JOHN M'CLURG. Where are you going, eh ?

TOM M'CLURG. Out.

(JOHN M'CLURG half rises from his seat, but sinks back again quickly with pain.)

JOHN M'CLURG. You're not going out. Do you hear ?

TOM M'CLURG (*crossly*). And who's going to prevent me from going out ?

JOHN M'CLURG. I am (*moderating his voice*.) Sit down,

now. I'm your father, Tom, and I expect you to pay some attention to me.

MRS M'CLURG. Tom, dear, sit down for a wee while, just to please him.

TOM M'CLURG. I'm not going to be ordered about like a child.

MRS. M'CLURG (*to her husband*). Just be quiet now, John, and explain what it is you want without lossing your temper, and he'll pay attention to you.

(JOHN M'CLURG *makes an effort to be restrained*.)

JOHN M'CLURG. Well, I'll explain it quietly. It's this way, Tom. You know the pride I take in the Orange Lodge, and the way the M'Clurgs has always worked hard for it? Don't you know?

TOM M'CLURG. I do, da.

JOHN M'CLURG. And you know that I'm upset about not being able to go the morrow the same as I've gone every other year.

TOM M'CLURG. I daresay you are.

JOHN M'CLURG. Well, now, won't you do as I tell you, and go to the Field in my place? You wouldn't have it said a M'Clurg wasn't there?

TOM M'CLURG. I'm not going, da.

ANDY HAVERON. It's a quare privilege for you to be allowed, Tom.

TOM M'CLURG. It's no good your talking, Andy. I'm not going to no Field.

JOHN M'CLURG (*again angry*). You *are* going.

TOM M'CLURG. I'm not, I tell you.

JOHN M'CLURG. But, man, think of the Battle of the Boyne.

TOM M'CLURG. I don't want to think about it.

JOHN M'CLURG. Jessie, do you hear him? There's the son you've reared on me Talking like that. I'll not own him, I tell you. (MRS. M'CLURG *is about to speak, but he shouts at her*.) Don't speak to me, woman, I've made up my mind. I'll not own him. He's no son of mine unless he goes to the Field te-morrow.

The Orangeman

MRS. M'CLURG. Aw, now, don't be talking the like of that, John. He's the only child you have. If he was to take you at your word, you'd be wanting him back in a week.

TOM M'CLURG. I wouldn't go near the Field. I'm not an Orangeman, and I never will be. If you think I'm going to bother my head about your ould Orange Lodges and your members of parliament, talking their damned rot, you're quaren mistaken. You would think at your age, you would know better.

JOHN M'CLURG. Is it me you're talking to? (*Spluttering.*) You pup, you!

TOM M'CLURG. Ay, it's you and no one else, and I've no call to be talked to like dirt. (*Goes up to his father.*)

JOHN M'CLURG. Well, you can go then. Go on! Go and live up the Falls Road with the Fenians, damn you! I don't want you here.

(*He gives TOM a shove, and TOM falls on the floor.*)

MRS. M'CLURG. For dear sake, John, what are you doing?

(*TOM picks himself up. He is wild with anger.*)

TOM M'CLURG. I've bore a good deal from you, da, because you're my da, but I'll bear no more. I'm sick of you and your ould drum. Damn your drum!

(*He thrusts his foot through the skin of the drum.*)

ANDY HAVERON. Aw, Tom, you've destroyed it.

(*There is a sudden quietness in the kitchen. JOHN M'CLURG lies back in his seat and gazes at the broken drum with misery in his eyes.*)

JOHN M'CLURG (*in a dry, sorrowful voice*). It's a quare thing, surely, to think a M'Clurg was the man to destroy the drum his da carried since he was a wee lad. It's a quare thing that. I'll have no pride now to be going to the Field and me beating the drum hard.

TOM M'CLURG. I'm not sorry for what I've done.

MRS. M'CLURG. Well, well, it can't be helped. I'm thinking maybe, you'd all be the better for a wee drop more tea if I was to make it. Sure, all the drums of the

world won't make up for a son that's angry with his da. Let me put it away, now, and don't be thinking about it any more. (*She lifts the drum up and carries it towards the door.*) Och, it's just as heavy as ever it was, for all the airs' been let out of it.

MIXED MARRIAGE

This Play was first performed at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, on the 30th March, 1911. It was produced by Lennox Robinson, with the following cast :—

<i>John Rainey</i>	. . .	ARTHUR SINCLAIR
<i>Mrs. Rainey</i>	. . .	MAIRE O'NEILL
<i>Tom Rainey</i>	. . .	U. WRIGHT
<i>Hugh Rainey</i>	. . .	J. M. KERRIGAN
<i>Nora Murray</i>	. . .	MAIRE NIC SHIUBHLAIGH
<i>Michael O'Hara</i>	. . .	J. A. O'ROURKE

THE MAGNANIMOUS LOVER

“The Magnanimous Lover” was first played at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, October 17th, 1912, with the following cast :

JANE CATHER	...	...	...	<i>Mon Beirne</i>
WILLIAM CATHER	...	...	...	<i>Sydney G. Morgan</i>
SAMUEL HINDE	...	...	...	<i>J. A. O'Rourke</i>
HENRY HINDE	...	...	...	<i>J. M. Kerrigan</i>
MAGGIE CATHER	...	...	...	<i>Maire O'Neill</i>

The Play was produced by LENNOX ROBINSON.

THE CRITICS

“The Critics” was performed at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, for the first time on November 20th, 1913, with the following cast:—

<i>Mr. Barbary</i>	. . . .	J. M. KERRIGAN
<i>Mr. Quacks</i>	. . . .	FRED. O'DONOVAN
<i>Mr. Quartz</i>	. . . .	SYDNEY J. MORGAN
<i>Mr. Bawlawney</i>	. . . .	ARTHUR SINCLAIR
<i>An Attendant</i>	. . . .	H. E. HUTCHINSON

It was produced by LENNOX ROBINSON.

THE ORANGEMAN

“The Orangeman” was produced for the first time at the Palace Theatre, Maidstone, by Mr. Esme Percy and Miss Kirsteen Graeme, with the following cast:—

<i>John M'Clurg</i>	. . . .	DESMOND BRANNIGAN
<i>Jessie M'Clurg</i>	. . . .	UNA GILBERT
<i>Andy Haveron</i>	. . . .	J. A. KEOGH
<i>Tom M'Clurg</i>	. . . .	W. J. REA

The play was subsequently performed in the English provinces with the same cast, except that Miss Judith Wogan took the part of Mrs. M'Clurg. It was also produced at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, by Mr. A. Patrick Wilson with the following cast on March 21, 1914:—

<i>John M'Clurg</i>	. . . .	A. PATRICK WILSON
<i>Jessie M'Clurg</i>	CATHLEEN MACCARTHY
<i>Andy Haveron</i>	SEAN CONNOLLY
<i>Tom M'Clurg</i>	TOMAS O'NEILL

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